TALES

OF

MY TIME.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF BLUE-STOCKING HALL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

THE YOUNG REFORMERS.

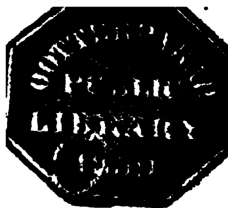
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TALES OF MY TIME.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rising before the sun had appeared above the horizon, I commenced my pilgrimage. The way was rough and tedious; but though fruitful of misadventure, the hindrances which obstructed my path having had nothing to recommend them in the way of romance, I pass over a tiresome journey, and will not travel anew along the trackless regions which I had to pass.

After sundry difficulties and many interruptions, I reached the place whither I was bound, and began to act upon my orders. So unexpected was my arrival, and so secret my plans, that my object [illegible]ered. I entered on my task with caution; exerted all my ingenuity; arrested my man; frightened him out of deeds and debt, and came to the end of my business in such miraculous brief space, that nothing short of "veni, vidi,

vici," seemed sufficiently flattering and epigrammatic for my good fortune. Some applause was perhaps my due, but I gave myself more than I deserved. Placing the valise which contained my treasure on a table, I turned the key in an outer door, and retiring after a day of great fatigue to an inner chamber, went to rest, longing for day, that I might commence my homeward course.

"The *corps diplomatique* must hide their diminished heads in future," thought I, "and bow to my superior generalship. I shall rise to the highest pinnacle in my uncle's favour, when I give him a detail of my achievements. I shall shew him that what appeared delicate, difficult, and intricate to ordinary minds, was rendered easy of accomplishment through *my* genius, which has overcome every obstacle; I shall henceforward *command* the estimation which I have hitherto failed to *win*."

Soothed and self-complacent, I commended myself to Morpheus, and never unclosed my eye-lids till the full day-light appeared to chide my laziness. My first waking impulse was to take a look at my dear valise; so starting up,

and opening the door of communication between my bed chamber, and the outer apartment which served as my sitting room, I sprang forward to the table on which I had placed the portmanteau, but saw it not. Wild with dismay, I ran to and fro from room to room, overturning whatever came in my way, in the agony of fruitless search. The valise was gone; I tried the door which was locked just as I left it, but I now perceived that I had left the window, which had no fastening, entirely unprotected, and a short ladder would suffice to gain its height on the outside.

I put on my clothes, roused the people of the house, and searched everywhere, but all in vain. I could not gain any tidings of my property. No language can paint my situation. After having accomplished my purpose so completely, aud rejoiced in the consequences of my success by anticipation, till my sanguine spirit had reached the summit of its wishes, here was a merciless crush which destroyed the whole fabric of my hopes. What carelessness! what childish absurdity, to leave the valise in the

outer apartment! Was there ever such folly? All my address and industry were fruitless. I could never boast of either in the recovery of that which I had lost again, through the most shameful absence of common sense.

My misfortune arose entirely from that same confidence in my own ability which had always been my bane; and what was worse than any censure incurred for my stupid conduct, I might be suspected of inventing this story of a robbery, and being the real thief myself. "Such an unworthy thought will not cross my uncle's mind," said I, "but others will accuse me, and I shall blush, and look guilty at the bare apprehension."

I threw myself into a chair, and sat for some time like one arrested by a stroke of the palsy. I was overwhelmed; but at length reviving from this torpor, I dashed out of the house, told of my loss to all I met, and set every engine at work, which gave me the smallest chance of regaining the stolen booty. I posted placards; offered rewards; but to no purpose. What was to be done? I could not return to Quebec, and yet not to do so, opened the door of suspi-

cion very reasonably on my motives. Sometimes I thought of going into the woods and living henceforward amongst the Indians. At other times I resolved to employ the money with which I had been supplied for my expedition, in making the best of my way to Glendruid, where, like the prodigal, I would confess my sins, ask forgiveness, and endeavour to appease my uncle by writing a true statement of all that had happened.

But would my tale be believed? Ought I not boldly go in person and relate the facts, trusting to the effect of truth upon a generous mind? Harassed and tortured in suspense and uncertainty, I lingered, still hoping for tidings, and doubtful what course to pursue, when within two days of the time which I prescribed to myself as the utmost limit of my delay before something must be done, a packet of letters was put into my hands from Quebec.

I dreaded to break the seal, expecting to find a scolding for my silence, or perhaps a command to hasten my return. On opening it I found merely a kind line from my uncle,

hoping soon to see me, and inclosing a letter directed in the hand-writing of my sister Maria, and sealed with black wax. A cold shuddering seized my limbs, and I held the letter for some time unfolded, as if a secret presentiment revealed its contents. At length I was in possession of the dreadful fact that I had lost my mother.

I was now, indeed, destined to taste the bitter waters of affliction, and thought that I should lose my senses. The preceding circumstances had humbled my pride, and lowered my spirits. The upbraiding of conscience now became intolerable. I could neither eat nor sleep, and fever quickly raged through every pulse. The news of my beloved mother's death, which made me now too keenly sensible how dear she was to my soul, was conveyed without particulars, in the following brief communication from my younger sister:

"My pen almost refuses the sad office, yet must I endeavour to overcome the stupor which weighs down every faculty, to inform my once dear Albert of his angelic mother's departure

from a world in which sorrow has been the portion of her latter days.

"She is gone to a brighter scene, and will reap the reward of faith and hope; but our inconsolable father requires unceasing attention, and I can write no more. Ere long you shall hear from me again, and yet how can I tell whether even this dreadful event will have power to awaken your dormant affection. Adieu.

"Your affectionate, but broken hearted,

"MARIA."

I read this short letter over and over, till my brain was on fire. A note which had been slipped into it evidently after my uncle had written in the cover, spoke a friendly word of condolence from him, and urged me to lose no time in setting out, adding, that a confidential clerk should be sent to finish any negociation which I might leave imperfect. Nothing could be kinder, but I was not in a condition to avail myself of this considerate conduct. I could not shed a tear, and gasped for breath. I tried to write, but my hand trembled, and my mind wandered. I found it impossible to collect my

scattered thoughts into any coherent expression, and the agony in my throat at last seemed to threaten suffocation.

Of what occurred during a fortnight afterwards I was wholly unconscious. Fever increased to intensity. I was violently delirious, and can only remember that I imagined every body who approached my bed to be my mother. Sometimes I endeavoured to throw myself at her feet. Again, I made an effort to seize her hand. At times I called aloud, and desired the attendants to bear her far from me, lest her frown should annihilate my existence. At length the remedies which were used restored my faculties, and reason resumed her seat; but such was the debility which ensued, that life appeared a burthen to me. In spite, however, of all that I suffered, both of mental and corporeal pain, the elasticity of a youthful constitution carried me through, and the first exercise of returning strength was dedicated to my uncle, to whom I wrote a few lines to thank him for his goodness, and report my progress towards recovery.

It was dusk, and I had with difficulty sealed

my letter, when my chamber door was opened by the landlady, who put in her head to say that a person desired to see me for a moment on a matter of importance. I ordered him to be admitted, and felt a vague hope flutter at my heart. I had not leisure for much conjecture. A disagreeable looking, swarthy, keen-eyed little man, whom I had never seen before, stood in my presence, and abruptly asking, "Are you Albert Fitzmaurice?" to which I replied in the affirmative, threw a paper on the table, near which I sat too weak to rise, and vanished in an instant. I caught the note hastily and read these words:

"Circumstances of a peculiar nature, which cannot be explained at present, induce those who deprived you of certain valuable property to restore a part of it, if you possess steadiness and courage sufficient to observe with the strictest fidelity, the conditions here proposed. The slightest violation of them will expose your life to imminent peril. On the day fortnight of that which you receive this notice enter the northern boundary of Longwood forest. Pur-

sue a forward course due south; let the hour be that of commencing twilight; you must be quite alone, and unarmed. On advancing some way, you will perceive a great maple tree, somewhat detached from the surrounding mass of wood; and you will find an arrow stuck in the bark, to direct you more securely.

"When arrived at this tree remove some loose moss which will be found at its foot; deposit fifty British pounds, or should the late robbery have left you without means to do so, bring a check upon some solvent house in Quebec, or Montreal, to the above amount. Do not utter a single word; and should any human figure approach the place which you occupy, while you are depositing the money, turn your eyes to the opposite side, and halt close to the tree, till the discharge of a pistol proclaims that all is right. Let the first shot be your signal for retracing the path by which you enter the forest; and should a syllable escape your lips after your return to Quebec, bearing the most distant allusion to this adventure, it will be faithfully reported, and your heart's blood will

pay the forfeit of your imprudence; therefore, if you value your life, be secret."

Lost in amazement, I rubbed my eyes, doubting the evidence of my senses, and fancied during a few seconds that a relapse of delirium produced the phantom which had just glided from my view. A short interval, however, satisfied me that I was of sane mind; I held the paper in my hands of which I have mentioned the contents. It was folded, but had not been sealed, and was evidently a fly-leaf of some old quarto volume, quite discoloured by age. The writing was like that of a child, and probably feigned to ensure concealment, as the spelling was correct. In turning the paper from side to side, I raised it between my eyes and the light opposite to where I sat, and perceived in the water mark, which was partly torn off, the word Dublin, which shewed that the book to which it once belonged was printed in Ireland. What strange accident brought it here, and what mystery raised a friend to me so far from home it was useless to conjecture.

The more I tried to unravel the enigma, the

less was I able to solve it. The proposed adventure was full of peril; the scene a spacious forest; the appointed time "after sunset." Alone, unarmed, the danger appeared obvious, and the probability of deception equally so. Yet if I neglected this opportunity, I should have no other chance of recovering the parchments, which were much more valuable to the owner than the sum of which I had been deprived; and as they could not be of the smallest use to any other person, it seemed just *possible*, that to obtain the demanded bribe of fifty pounds, one of the gang might actually restore them in the manner specified. My curiosity was powerfully excited, and the recklessness of existence which bodily weakness and depression of spirits induced, determined me at all hazards to try the undertaking. I could *but* die in the attempt, and my state of mind was such that I set little value on life.

Having despatched my letter to Quebec, and prepared my uncle for delay occasioned by my illness, without adverting to any thing that had happened, I fixed my mind upon the enterprize

in prospect, and resolved, before I set out, to leave a written narrative of all that had passed directed to my uncle, and to be forwarded to him in case of my falling into a snare, and losing my life in this romantic experiment.

The appointed day arrived, and I had gained sufficient strength to proceed to Longwood. I did not apprize any one of my intended expedition, but managed so as to reach the maple-tree just as the sun's light had so nearly retired as to leave the surrounding objects only dimly visible. Weak and exhausted, as I arrived at the spot where I was desired to deposit the order for fifty pounds, I began to think that I had acted very like a fool in running such a risk; but the die was cast, and it was too late to repent. I removed the loose moss as directed, laid the slip of paper, on which I had drawn a check, underneath, covered it lightly, and leaned my back against the trunk to abide the issue.

I had not been in this attitude many minutes ere a tall figure, wrapped in a large cloak, glided from the darkest part of the forest, and passing me rapidly, darted a horrible glance which con-

gealed every drop of blood in my veins. He pounced on the paper like a vulture on its prey, held it close to his eyes for an instant, and in the next, fired a pistol, which reverberated through the wooded solitude. This signal was followed by a loud whistle, and answered by a second shot. Two figures, which appeared gigantic in the twilight, emerged from the opposite side of the forest. and joined their comrade, who almost brushing me as he passed, cried in a voice of thunder, "Begone this moment—turn to the right, and remember that you are to be blind, deaf, and dumb."

Notwithstanding the rapidity of this man's action, I had a glimpse of both his face and person, as he motioned me away by waving his hand towards the path which I was to take. The wind in that moment caught his cloak, which was drawn aside, and the idea of Richard Lovett immediately struck upon my mind—but what connection could he have with a gang of banditti? What should bring him into such a situation, or why, if really an old friend, and designing to prove himself such, should he avoid

to recognize me? It was not to be imagined, and the likeness must have been merely accidental. If the suddenness of the vision had deprived me of all presence of mind, I had not time to betray surprise, so quickly did it vanish.

No sooner did I find myself alone, than I quickened my pace, and, till I was at some distance from the maple tree, never once recollected that I was returning *minus* fifty pounds, and had not heard a word concerning the parchments. Stunned by the first remembrance of what had been the sole object of my journey, I stood still as if transfixed. In the confusion of the scene I had forgotten the deeds, and now, clasping my hands, and cursing my folly anew, I confessed myself to be the veriest dupe in creation; when, perceiving something white lying on the grass a few yards before me, I picked it up, and looking carefully round, to ascertain that I was not observed, read on the back of a knave of clubs as follows:

"Hasten back whence you came. In the same spot from which your valise was taken, you will find a parcel containing your lost pa-

pers. We are aware of their value to your uncle, but, in consideration to you, have only required the small sum already stipulated for their restoration. Be secret, or take the consequences."

How extraordinary! Consideration for me? The whole affair was a paradox which baffled every effort of my brain to explain. Gaining the confines of Longwood forest, I beheld the open country with gratitude to Heaven for my escape, and pursued my way as speedily as a debilitated frame would permit.

On arriving at the house in which I lodged, I found the parchments made up in a parcel, in the precise spot from whence they had been taken, and after resting my weary limbs, and packing my few goods and chattels, I set forward to Quebec; where I arrived without farther accident, though oppressed by the anxiety of having to inform my uncle of his loss. His kindness soon relieved my mind. As he was very wealthy, the money of which I had been robbed was no object to him, in comparison of that part of his property which I restored in

safety—and my sorrow worked so effectually on his excellent heart, that he hurried over my account, and would scarcely listen to as much of the story as I could tell without disobeying the friendly thief.

Other robberies had taken place, perpetrated in all likelihood by the same gang, and therefore mine appeared probable enough; and when I spoke of repaying fifty pounds, for which my necessities had forced me to draw, out of the liberal recompense which I received for the execution of my commission, my uncle insisted on adding that to the amount of his gift, in consideration of my severe illness, of which the traces were still very visible.

Thus fortunate was the conclusion of an adventure which cost me dearly, but it was the first in my life that brought a serious humiliation to my arrogance, and thus overpaid, a thousand fold, the distress which I endured.

CHAPTER IX.

On my return I met with a new acquaintance in a near relation, who had arrived during my absence. His name was Gerald Courtenay, and his mother, the only sister of my own. My aunt lived in North Wales, but my eldest brother was the only member of our family who had visited her retreat, and though a constant correspondence was maintained between Glendruid and Penrhüdlyn, I had never seen my cousin before, and only knew him by character.

Gerald Courtenay was a fine looking youth, with the noblest expression of contenance I had ever seen. There was an air of integrity and openness in his look, which inspired unhesitating trust, and his features were a faithful index to the soul of which they made report. Religious without severity—virtuous without boast—gentle and affectionate, he appeared so happily con-

stituted as to fall naturally into the course which a few others toil through life to gain, finding new obstacles impeding every step of their progress. In any other state of mind than that which I brought back to Quebec I should have hated my cousin for being such a contrast to myself; but I was humbled. I was afflicted; and there was something inexpressibly soothing in the kindness of Gerald's sympathy, and the perfect absence of ostentation and self-esteem which marked his whole demeanour.

Nothing which the most considerate feeling could suggest was left untried by this excellent young man to detach my thoughts from the harassing recollections which preyed upon my mind. Nor was any consolation neglected which friendship could impart. He did not know at that time how I was torn by remorse. He believed that I had been such a son as he was himself, to such a mother as he possessed; and supposed that the grief of bereavement made up the full measure of my sufferings. Much as I felt on that score, the sorest agony which I endured was from self-reproach.

Gerald was my senior by little more than a year, yet his information seemed universal, and as solid as it was various. Before he had been many days added to my uncle's family he had won all hearts by his goodness, and charmed every body by his manners and understanding.

He had been designed for the bar, but the sudden death of his father, followed by pecuniary embarrassment, had checked his career, and induced his widowed mother to apply, through mine, to my uncle, who, with his usual promptitude, complied with the request that he would take Gerald into his counting house. The youth submitted with virtuous fortitude to the necessity of his situation; and instead of repining at quitting the profession of his choice, resolved on relieving his parent's anxiety, by turning his best energies to a new and distasteful occupation; and so rapid was the progress which he made, that in a very short time he was the main spring of our office.

I was one day sitting alone with him in the evening, when he took a manuscript volume from his writing case, and opening the book,

pointed to some stanzas, saying, "Albert, I would not shew you this interesting memento of my dear aunt, till your first emotions were past; but it may gratify you now to see the last characters which were traced by your mother's hand. She wrote them at my request, in my farewell flight to Glendruid, previous to my embarkation for America."

I grew faint at the sight of that hand writing, of which I had reserved but one solitary vestige. Gerald perceived my agitation, and would have taken the book from my hands, but I held it fast, desirous to discover the tone of mind in which these *last* words had been expressed, and earnestly wishing to find some internal evidence, from which I might draw comfort, in the hope that my neglect did not weigh upon my mother's spirit in the closing scene of life. Alas! the verses, addressed to Gerald, bore witness to the sorrow which dwelt in the bosom of her who inscribed them.

Yes! how rapid is thought, and how fertile its flow,
While young spirit ascending, reflects a rich glow
On all that is seen or believ'd;

When the past like an evening in summer but sleeps,
In soft shadows that lie on the heath-purpled steeps,
And a bright gleam still follows the dew drop that weeps
Ere Hope has her victim deceiv'd.

But as Time travels on disappointment corrodes,
And the Muse turns away from Grief's dreary abodes,
(Yon caves of the dark swelling wave,)
To disport in the breeze, string her lute in the bower,
Spread her mantle to catch April's brief glittering shower
That bespangles with gems every leaflet and flower,
Even that which hangs over the grave.

Oh then ask not of one for whom gladness in store
Has no charm to propitiate the Muse any more,
To tune her sad accents for thee!
For my summer is gone, and my winter is near,
And my youth hath pass'd by; and my leaf in the sear,
Trembling, tells that for me there is little left here
Of this world's deceptions to see.

How often, my Gerald, shall Time go its round,
Ere again in this circle of love thou art bound?
Say where shall I be in that hour?
Tyrant Death may have silenced my hopes and my fears,
And the tomb may have clos'd on my cares and my tears
While *thy* life is yet in the bloom of its years,
And pleasure a bright opening flower.

But a Mother's glad arms shall enfold thee again,
If the prayer of this heart be not wafted in vain
To the Throne which is seated on high;
And remember, dear youth, though all truths else beside
Should escape from thy grasp along Memory's tide,
That no love like a Mother's shall ever abide,
To cherish thee under the sky.

Plant no thorn in the bosom that pillow'd thy head,
Be a blessing to her who watch'd over thy bed,
And gaz'd on thy infantine face;
While the the future was dreamily pictur'd to view,
And fond Hope still delighted her pledge to renew,
That thy joys should be many, and cares but a few
Their shades in thy bright path should trace.

Never throw off the jesses which wind round thy soul;
And though ocean divide, and its billows may roll,
The line will but lengthen—not sever.
Yes! that gossamer filament, strung, but unseen,
Shall stretch o'er the wide seas expanded between
Fair Columbia and Erin of emerald green,
Invisibly guiding for ever.

And with east or with west when there's no more to do,
The dear cord of affection shall still be thy clue—
It reaches from earth to the skies;
It is strong as elastic, and cannot be spent;
Hold it fast, and its steadying aid shall be lent
To sustain the light spirit's impatient ascent,
And draw it towards heaven as it flies.

This little poem was designed to soothe, but it distracted me. The sight of an effusion so affecting to my heart, however, had one beneficial consequence which he to whom it was addressed did not anticipate, and from the moment in which my tears fell upon this manuscript, I had no secrets from Gerald, into whose breast I poured out a full confession of the past;

and never was confidence reposed in a truer friend, a friend who treated my errors with tenderness, yet sought to correct them with uncompromising fidelity. The idea that my mother thought of *me*, while she wrote these touching lines, that she alluded to disappointments caused by her sons, of whom I felt that I was the most guilty, and above all, the bitter reflection that I had never written one word, or even sent a message expressive of contrition since I left home, completely wrung every feeling, till the cup of sorrow seemed full to the brim.

My only refuge was in the sympathy of one, whose excellence did not permit him to palliate my offences, though he was continually employed in trying to assuage the overwhelming sense of them, which now bowed me down to the ground. Such is the natural depravity of the human soul, such the contrariety of man, that had death not deprived me of my mother, I should, in all probability, have soon relapsed into pride and obduracy, notwithstanding the late discipline which I had suffered. The

abasement which my ill fortune at Delawar had produced, had followed a severe indisposition, which weakened my frame and rendered me acutely sensible of the contrast between such solitude as I experienced in a land of strangers, and the tenderness of those domestic ties which I had neglected to cultivate at home. With returning health these feelings would have been dispelled, and presumption would too surely have resumed its influence over my mind, in which the only principle which insures stability of purpose was as yet unknown.

But death had worked a change of a more durable nature. It was now in vain to wish that I could throw myself at the feet of that being whose heart I had troubled, and whose eyes I had made to weep. That hand which, in the latest hour, would have been extended to raise the suppliant, was cold, fixed, and powerless. The eye which would have beamed upon a repentant exile was closed in everlasting sleep, or gazed upon me from a distant world which I was not enabled to penetrate. The anguish which I felt was unavailing, and preyed upon

my spirits; I had no peace. The most affrighting images pursued me, and but for the guardian angel whom heaven had vouchsafed in the hour of adversity to send to my relief I should soon have followed my mother to the grave. My unhappy father *did* follow her. Three months had scarcely elapsed after the loss of her who had been the dearest object of his earthly love, ere his sorrows came to an end, and he reached that tranquil shore, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

The death of my father was keenly felt in my now softened state of mind, but my grief for him was much alleviated by an assurance through my sisters that he forgave and blessed me; that my penitence afforded him a ray of joy in the midst of darkness, while faith pictured the brightness of a world to come, in which he should be reunited to the wife of his bosom. Those who watched his dying moments with fondest solicitude least desired to stay his happy flight. There is a peculiar tenderness also in the relation of father and son which rarely subsists

between people of the same sex, and the stroke seemed providential that saved this excellent man from a painful trial which awaited the survivors of his house, in the fall of my second brother. It was but a few months after the decease of his parents that Charles was killed in a skirmish with the King's troops, and inhumanly cut to pieces by some of the rebels, who, coming up to the spot where he lay weltering in his blood, mistook him for an enemy, and wreaked their vengeance on his lifeless corpse.

Glendruid, the peaceful sunny retreat where first I saw the light, and breathed the pure air of heaven, that happy spot, the wild fragrance of whose mountain heath, the romantic beauty of whose rocky beach, first taught my soul to glow with the ardour of liberty, was become a desert. My father gone, "another took his office," and my poor Geraldine and Maria, like our first parents quitting Paradise, led their dreary way hand in hand, not knowing whither to direct their orphan steps.

This uncertainty was not of long continuance.

My eldest brother was a wanderer, and had followed the fortunes of his friend who had lately notified his safe return from America, and invited Harold to join his standard. I heard but once from that interesting person, who wrote to condole with me on my domestic afflictions, with a pathos which proved how truly he could feel them. In that only letter which I ever received from him, he mentioned that his affairs did not prosper, that anxiety and want threatened to be his portion during some time, while ultimate success was extremely doubtful. He had, however, devoted himself to the cause, and was resolved to finish the sacrifice, but, aware of the dangers that surrounded him, he besought me to employ whatever influence I might possess with my brother, to deter him from encouning the perils which he saw encompassing his own destiny.

Geraldine was taken by my aunt Courtenay to the sweet retirement of Penrhüdlyn, in North Wales, and Maria was warmly invited by a distant relation, who was an opulent man, and agent to several noblemen and gentlemen of

large fortune, some of whom frequently visited at his house in the north of Ireland. My sisters had often been asked to the elegant mansion of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, but had hitherto declined their invitations, from disinclination on my mother's part to disturb the contentment of her daughters' minds, by sending them to mingle in scenes of gayer life, which naturally awaken youthful eyes to the deficiencies of their own homes, and create more pain by the comparison between wealth and poverty than occasional glimpses into the dwellings of luxury and abundance are enabled to requite.

But at present the case was very different. Maria had no longer a home; and though it was a heart-breaking trial to separate from Geraldine, she had no alternative. Too poor to live independently, and too much overcome by recent calamities to plan for themselves, my sisters now suffered their kind friends to judge for them, and each gratefully accepted the proffered asylum, which promised to supply every tender consolation likely to alleviate the sense of their misfortunes.

The dispersion of my family, and their removal from the neighbourhood of Glendruid, prevented me from hearing much of my former companions. My sisters purposely avoided political topics, from the fear of implicating those whom they would have been shocked to endanger; and confined themselves to expressing their anxiety for Harold, respecting whose fate they were entirely ignorant.

Time rolled on. I hated my profession more and more, and frequently tried the patience of my uncle, whose forbearance was invincible, or he could never have borne with my forgetfulness and want of method. All my leisure moments were passed with my cousin, who became the depository of every thought, and whose admirable judgment was continually employed in rectifying my errors. We read, we walked, we conversed together, and Gerald never let slip an opportunity of demonstrating the absurdity of my former conduct, and awakening my mind to exertions of a better kind.

During this period, Irish affairs were so unsettled, as to cause much solicitude for the friends

who remained in their own country. Frequent attempts were made by the rebels to disturb the government, and many of the leaders were taken up. It may be naturally imagined that I felt no small disquietude at an unusual length of silence on the part of my sisters. At length letters arrived, and I opened them with a trembling at heart, which proved too sure an omen of their contents. It appeared by reference to preceding communications which had never reached my hands, that former packets had either miscarried or been intercepted, and I now learned for the first time, that Harold's dear friend, and I may say my own, for I loved him much, whose virtues were worthy of a happier fate, had paid the penalty of rebellion, and the forfeit was his life.

Harold had been captured with him, and would have probably shared his sad destiny, but it was not so decreed. The hardships which my poor brother had undergone in following the fortunes of one whom he loved better than his own existence, proved too much for a frame originally delicate; and the anguish of his mind

during an imprisonment, in which he was denied all access to his friend, brought on a fever of the brain, which terminated in settled melancholy of the most interesting nature.

No longer accountable, and no longer to be feared, he was liberated as one incapable of mischief, and his room was wanted for crowds, who in those dreary days of proscription and distrust, were daily poured into every place of confinement in Ireland.

Harold disappeared when his prison doors were thrown open, and no effort to trace him had been hitherto successful.

There is a point of excitement beyond which it would seem that the feelings cease to be affected. Were it not so, life could hardly sustain the burthen of woe which falls to the lot of some mortals. I felt benumbed by the quick succession of misfortunes. My mother had drained the sluices of grief, and I fell into a stupor which appeared to paralyze my faculties. How long this torpid state of inaction might have lasted I cannot tell, if other scenes and occupations had not thrown me into a new

current of thought, and delivered me from myself.

A summons was sent to Gerald and me, desiring that we should meet my uncle in his study, and I obeyed the order, fully persuaded that I was going to receive my dismissal, against the justice of which I had not a word to object, as I really felt that I must be an incumbrance. Yet the idea of being now forced to exertion, and turned from the hospitable roof which had hitherto sheltered me, roused some alarm. So little did I care for life, that I could have laid it down with pleasure, if a sort of shudder had not thrilled as the image of an offended Deity would suggest itself, and the "dread of something after death," rush upon my mind, and retard the half formed purpose, from completion. Some literary pursuit might be congenial, I thought, to my taste, but I had no energy to determine what it should be, nor to take the necessary steps for commencing any new scheme of life.

In this state of wretchedness I obeyed the summons, which I felt persuaded was to banish

me from my uncle's presence. Gerald and I presented ourselves together, and found my uncle waiting for us. He desired us to sit down, and addressed us in the following manner, accompanied by a smile of such complacent good humour, as dispelled my fears before he began to speak:

"Nephews, I wish to speak to you," said he. "I have lately been so urgently solicited to embark a part of my capital in the fur trade, that I am induced to try the experiment; but as my answer to the proposal which I have just received to that effect must depend on you, I have called you here for the purpose of asking whether you will enter into my views, and condemn yourselves willingly to a temporary banishment for my sake. It is necessary that I should be able to put confidence in the agents whom I employ, as I must remain myself at Quebec; but if you both feel disposed to gratify me by encountering Hudson's Bay for a period of three years, I will send you thither with liberal salaries. At Prince of Wales's Fort you will not find much to allure the senses,

but, supplied as you shall be with books, you may employ yourselves to much advantage. At your time of life three years will pass swiftly by, and I shall, if I live, be glad to reward a faithful discharge of your duty in these frozen regions by establishing you in partnership upon your return. You are young, and ought to endeavour after independence. You are blessed with abilities which should not be allowed to become useless through want of employment. You, my poor Albert, have been much tried of late, and I have spared you for a season; but I should not be the true friend I desire to prove myself were I to indulge you any longer in unavailing regrets. We are not permitted to mourn the dead, so as to forget what we owe to the living. Brace up the cords of your heart, and make an effort to become a valuable member of society. I would not send you *alone* into the desert which I now propose as your habitation; but in company with Gerald your time may be spent both agreeably and profitably, gliding past you like the weaver's shuttle. Give me your answer this evening, and if you deter-

mine on the undertaking, prepare to leave me as soon as the requisite arrangements for your journey can be completed."

So saying, he rose from his seat, shook us both affectionately by the hand, and left the room. Our deliberations were brief, and our resolution formed long before the time appointed by my uncle for receiving our decision. Here was an opportunity of obliging him, and evincing gratitude to one who deserved all that we could return. Here was a prospect of competency which it would be criminal to neglect; and even the circumstance of change appeared joyfully welcome to a being situated like myself.

It is natural to the mind of man to fancy that, on quitting the scene of care or grief, he may be enabled to shake off the load that oppresses, and leave it behind him; light afflictions may be cast off in distance, but not so the pang which pierces to the heart's core, like that of remorse. There it rankles through time and space till, by a gradual process, the sharp edges of feeling are ground down, or the suffering

creature worn out, who writhed under the acuteness of its infliction.

Our reply was communicated by Gerald, and my uncle seemed much pleased by our cheerful acquiescence in his scheme. Through his benevolent consideration we were furnished with every species of accommodation which could soften the rigours of that tedious winter of the soul as well as body, which we were about to encounter, and he promised to send us a half yearly package, containing whatever might be most interesting and agreeable in our absence from the civilized world.

CHAPTER X.

My cousin's well regulated mind beheld in this unexpected turn of affairs a providential disposition, opening to his view the certain power of providing for the comfort of his mother and sisters. What Gerald called providence, was fortune in my vocabulary. I had sisters also, but my nerves were unstrung, and my activity palsied. I saw nothing with hope or encouragement, because I was not sustained by that staff which is the only prop of human weakness. I was an unbeliever; that is to say, I neither knew what I believed or disbelieved, as my real feelings were resolvable into a general repugnance to authority, and a rooted prejudice, which had been carefully infused into my mind, against whatever came recommended by

the wisdom of experience. The flippancy of ignorance passed with me for inborn genius; and nothing seemed reason in my eyes which required to be substantiated by the slow process of induction. The arguments which I loved were such as burst upon the view like Minerva from the head of Jove—a brilliant fable; and my understanding was so perverted by sophistry and presumption, that I beheld every object through a false medium. Happily for myself a change awaited me.

The necessary preparatives being finished, we took leave, and set forward upon our adventure. Arrived at our destination the mighty features of that gigantic wilderness by which we were surrounded imparted the first impression which I had ever felt of my utter insignificance. The emmet which labours up the side of yonder tiny hillock, containing myriads of that diminutive race, appears an animal of size and importance when compared with individual man in the vastness of expanse which now lay before me, wherever the eye could reach. Beyond the fortress, which was to be our dwelling, nature

held her silent reign, undisturbed by the jarring restlessness of human kind; and within the gloomy building, which looked more like a prison than a great mercantile factory, a few animal machines already dwelt, who seemed to have merely retained sufficient resemblance to the ordinary sons of Adam, to execute the trust of barter and exchange with the Indians who brought furs for sale.

These men took no pleasure in any species of intellectual pursuit. Not a book was to be seen amongst them. Brandy and tobacco were the luxuries which they enjoyed at home, and the stimulus of the chase the only resource that presented itself to occupy them abroad. In such society Gerald and I could not take any delight, and we therefore never mingled in it beyond what our duty required. Our employment was to act as intermediate agents between the Company and these *operatives*, whose business was of a more active sort, for which their coarse habits and hardy constitutions fitted them.

We lived almost entirely to ourselves, and when the routine of daily occupation had been

brought into train, and the simple wants of animal existence briefly satisfied, *time*, that curse or blessing of mankind, according to the use that is made of it, would have lain a heavy weight upon my hands, had Gerald's resources of mind not supplied oil for its wheels. Yet I was not at first prepared to taste of those resources nor benefit by their fertility. I had need of schooling to *unlearn* my former creeds, ere I was fitted to enjoy better things.

In the clear azure of that frosty firmament—in the interminable spread of that mighty ocean—in the stupendous vast of trackless forests, and the unbounded stretch of plains which had known neither enclosure nor division, my vanity found a salutary check. Gerald and I were gazing on the finest moon I ever saw, which threw its gentle lustre on a world of stillness, the silence of which was unbroken except by the distant howling of those wild inhabitants whose soft cloathing furnished our only pretext for disturbing their dominion. The sublime in nature gives rise to sublimity of thought, and the mind soars in contemplating the works of Omnipo-

tence, undefaced by the puny contrivance of mortal creatures.

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that Thou visitest him?" exclaimed my companion. "Alas!" I replied, "man 'is shorn of his beams' in such a place as this, where intellect has no subjects on which to employ itself."

"How can you say so?" answered Gerald. "Surely the grandeur of that lofty arch, studded with bright worlds, and enlightened by glorious suns; the majesty of that expanded ocean which lies before us, with all the stupendous in nature, would exhaust higher powers of intelligence than are bestowed on man to comprehend. Angels might be puzzled here. Yet the starry host are visible to our senses; the wonders of vegetation are spread beneath our feet; and the magnificent ocean roars in our ears; but how little do we know about them? 'Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds; the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?' No.

Though this is the favourite haunt of meditation, where mind, disentangled from the paltry pursuits which occupy the sons of men in busier scenes, expatiates in all its strength and clearness, how bounded is its flight! how limited its experience! Is it surprising, then, that the truths of religion, which are objects of inference, sensibility, faith, and hope, not of sight and touch, should elude our grasp when we attempt to bring them down to the vulgar level of our puerile reason? Those, too, who are fond of unbelief; who hug scepticism, and affect to cast aside all which cannot be explained by sense, forget the numberless facts of nature, now explained and developed by the progress of science, which were once unknown. Thus the infidel is foiled at both ends; the argument of incomprehensibility being equally applicable to the physical and metaphysical world; and on the other hand, discoveries daily proving that the dark and mysterious of one period becomes understood and familiar at another."

"I wish," said I, "that I could feel and reason as you do. I confess to be aware of a

gealed every drop of blood in my veins. He pounced on the paper like a vulture on its prey, held it close to his eyes for an instant, and in the next, fired a pistol, which reverberated through the wooded solitude. This signal was followed by a loud whistle, and answered by a second shot. Two figures, which appeared gigantic in the twilight, emerged from the opposite side of the forest. and joined their comrade, who almost brushing me as he passed, cried in a voice of thunder, "Begone this moment—turn to the right, and remember that you are to be blind, deaf, and dumb."

Notwithstanding the rapidity of this man's action, I had a glimpse of both his face and person, as he motioned me away by waving his hand towards the path which I was to take. The wind in that moment caught his cloak, which was drawn aside, and the idea of Richard Lovett immediately struck upon my mind—but what connection could he have with a gang of banditti? What should bring him into such a situation, or why, if really an old friend, and designing to prove himself such, should he avoid

to recognize me? It was not to be imagined, and the likeness must have been merely accidental. If the suddenness of the vision had deprived me of all presence of mind, I had not time to betray surprise, so quickly did it vanish.

No sooner did I find myself alone, than I quickened my pace, and, till I was at some distance from the maple tree, never once recollected that I was returning *minus* fifty pounds, and had not heard a word concerning the parchments. Stunned by the first remembrance of what had been the sole object of my journey, I stood still as if transfixed. In the confusion of the scene I had forgotten the deeds, and now, clasping my hands, and cursing my folly anew, I confessed myself to be the veriest dupe in creation; when, perceiving something white lying on the grass a few yards before me, I picked it up, and looking carefully round, to ascertain that I was not observed, read on the back of a knave of clubs as follows:

"Hasten back whence you came. In the same spot from which your valise was taken, you will find a parcel containing your lost pa-

pers. We are aware of their value to your uncle, but, in consideration to you, have only required the small sum already stipulated for their restoration. Be secret, or take the consequences."

How extraordinary! Consideration for me? The whole affair was a paradox which baffled every effort of my brain to explain. Gaining the confines of Longwood forest, I beheld the open country with gratitude to Heaven for my escape, and pursued my way as speedily as a debilitated frame would permit.

On arriving at the house in which I lodged, I found the parchments made up in a parcel, in the precise spot from whence they had been taken, and after resting my weary limbs, and packing my few goods and chattels, I set forward to Quebec; where I arrived without farther accident, though oppressed by the anxiety of having to inform my uncle of his loss. His kindness soon relieved my mind. As he was very wealthy, the money of which I had been robbed was no object to him, in comparison of that part of his property which I restored in

safety—and my sorrow worked so effectually on his excellent heart, that he hurried over my account, and would scarcely listen to as much of the story as I could tell without disobeying the friendly thief.

Other robberies had taken place, perpetrated in all likelihood by the same gang, and therefore mine appeared probable enough; and when I spoke of repaying fifty pounds, for which my necessities had forced me to draw, out of the liberal recompense which I received for the execution of my commission, my uncle insisted on adding that to the amount of his gift, in consideration of my severe illness, of which the traces were still very visible.

Thus fortunate was the conclusion of an adventure which cost me dearly, but it was the first in my life that brought a serious humiliation to my arrogance, and thus overpaid, a thousand fold, the distress which I endured.

CHAPTER IX.

On my return I met with a new acquaintance in a near relation, who had arrived during my absence. His name was Gerald Courtenay, and his mother, the only sister of my own. My aunt lived in North Wales, but my eldest brother was the only member of our family who had visited her retreat, and though a constant correspondence was maintained between Glendruid and Penrhüdlyn, I had never seen my cousin before, and only knew him by character.

Gerald Courtenay was a fine looking youth, with the noblest expression of contenance I had ever seen. There was an air of integrity and openness in his look, which inspired unhesitating trust, and his features were a faithful index to the soul of which they made report. Religious without severity—virtuous without boast—gentle and affectionate, he appeared so happily con-

stituted as to fall naturally into the course which a few others toil through life to gain, finding new obstacles impeding every step of their progress. In any other state of mind than that which I brought back to Quebec I should have hated my cousin for being such a contrast to myself; but I was humbled. I was afflicted; and there was something inexpressibly soothing in the kindness of Gerald's sympathy, and the perfect absence of ostentation and self-esteem which marked his whole demeanour.

Nothing which the most considerate feeling could suggest was left untried by this excellent young man to detach my thoughts from the harassing recollections which preyed upon my mind. Nor was any consolation neglected which friendship could impart. He did not know at that time how I was torn by remorse. He believed that I had been such a son as he was himself, to such a mother as he possessed; and supposed that the grief of bereavement made up the full measure of my sufferings. Much as I felt on that score, the sorest agony which I endured was from self-reproach.

Gerald was my senior by little more than a year, yet his information seemed universal, and as solid as it was various. Before he had been many days added to my uncle's family he had won all hearts by his goodness, and charmed every body by his manners and understanding.

He had been designed for the bar, but the sudden death of his father, followed by pecuniary embarrassment, had checked his career, and induced his widowed mother to apply, through mine, to my uncle, who, with his usual promptitude, complied with the request that he would take Gerald into his counting house. The youth submitted with virtuous fortitude to the necessity of his situation; and instead of repining at quitting the profession of his choice, resolved on relieving his parent's anxiety, by turning his best energies to a new and distasteful occupation; and so rapid was the progress which he made, that in a very short time he was the main spring of our office.

I was one day sitting alone with him in the evening, when he took a manuscript volume from his writing case, and opening the book,

pointed to some stanzas, saying, "Albert, I would not shew you this interesting memento of my dear aunt, till your first emotions were past; but it may gratify you now to see the last characters which were traced by your mother's hand. She wrote them at my request, in my farewell flight to Glendruid, previous to my embarkation for America."

I grew faint at the sight of that hand writing, of which I had reserved but one solitary vestige. Gerald perceived my agitation, and would have taken the book from my hands, but I held it fast, desirous to discover the tone of mind in which these *last* words had been expressed, and earnestly wishing to find some internal evidence, from which I might draw comfort, in the hope that my neglect did not weigh upon my mother's spirit in the closing scene of life. Alas! the verses, addressed to Gerald, bore witness to the sorrow which dwelt in the bosom of her who inscribed them.

Yes! how rapid is thought, and how fertile its flow,
While young spirit ascending, reflects a rich glow
On all that is seen or believ'd;

When the past like an evening in summer but sleeps,
In soft shadows that lie on the heath-purpled steeps,
And a bright gleam still follows the dew drop that weeps
Ere Hope has her victim deceiv'd.

But as Time travels on disappointment corrodes,
And the Muse turns away from Grief's dreary abodes,
(Yon caves of the dark swelling wave,)
To disport in the breeze, string her lute in the bower,
Spread her mantle to catch April's brief glittering shower,
That bespangles with gems every leaflet and flower,
Even that which hangs over the grave.

Oh then ask not of one for whom gladness in store
Has no charm to propitiate the Muse any more,
To tune her sad accents for thee!
For my summer is gone, and my winter is near,
And my youth hath pass'd by; and my leaf in the sear,
Trembling, tells that for me there is little left here
Of this world's deceptions to see.

How often, my Gerald, shall Time go its round,
Ere again in this circle of love thou art bound?
Say where shall I be in that hour?
Tyrant Death may have silenced my hopes and my fears,
And the tomb may have clos'd on my cares and my tears,
While *thy* life is yet in the bloom of its years,
And pleasure a bright opening flower.

But a Mother's glad arms shall enfold thee again,
If the prayer of this heart be not wafted in vain
To the Throne which is seated on high;
And remember, dear youth, though all truths else beside
Should escape from thy grasp along Memory's tide,
That no love like a Mother's shall ever abide,
To cherish thee under the sky.

Plant no thorn in the bosom that pillow'd thy head,
Be a blessing to her who watch'd over thy bed,
And gaz'd on thy infantine face;
While the the future was dreamily pictur'd to view,
And fond Hope still delighted her pledge to renew,
That thy joys should be many, and cares but a few
Their shades in thy bright path should trace.

Never throw off the jesses which wind round thy soul;
And though ocean divide, and its billows may roll,
The line will but lengthen—not sever.
Yes! that gossamer filament, strung, but unseen,
Shall stretch o'er the wide seas expanded between
Fair Columbia and Erin of emerald green,
Invisibly guiding for ever.

And with east or with west when there's no more to do,
The dear cord of affection shall still be thy clue—
It reaches from earth to the skies;
It is strong as elastic, and cannot be spent;
Hold it fast, and its steadying aid shall be lent
To sustain the light spirit's impatient ascent,
And draw it towards heaven as it flies.

This little poem was designed to soothe, but it distracted me. The sight of an effusion so affecting to my heart, however, had one beneficial consequence which he to whom it was addressed did not anticipate, and from the moment in which my tears fell upon this manuscript, I had no secrets from Gerald, into whose breast I poured out a full confession of the past;

and never was confidence reposed in a truer friend, a friend who treated my errors with tenderness, yet sought to correct them with uncompromising fidelity. The idea that my mother thought of *me*, while she wrote these touching lines, that she alluded to disappointments caused by her sons, of whom I felt that I was the most guilty, and above all, the bitter reflection that I had never written one word, or even sent a message expressive of contrition since I left home, completely wrung every feeling, till the cup of sorrow seemed full to the brim.

My only refuge was in the sympathy of one, whose excellence did not permit him to palliate my offences, though he was continually employed in trying to assuage the overwhelming sense of them, which now bowed me down to the ground. Such is the natural depravity of the human soul, such the contrariety of man, that had death not deprived me of my mother, I should, in all probability, have soon relapsed into pride and obduracy, notwithstanding the late discipline which I had suffered. The

abasement which my ill fortune at Delawar had produced, had followed a severe indisposition, which weakened my frame and rendered me acutely sensible of the contrast between such solitude as I experienced in a land of strangers, and the tenderness of those domestic ties which I had neglected to cultivate at home. With returning health these feelings would have been dispelled, and presumption would too surely have resumed its influence over my mind, in which the only principle which insures stability of purpose was as yet unknown.

But death had worked a change of a more durable nature. It was now in vain to wish that I could throw myself at the feet of that being whose heart I had troubled, and whose eyes I had made to weep. That hand which, in the latest hour, would have been extended to raise the suppliant, was cold, fixed, and powerless. The eye which would have beamed upon a repentant exile was closed in everlasting sleep, or gazed upon me from a distant world which I was not enabled to penetrate. The anguish which I felt was unavailing, and preyed upon

my spirits; I had no peace. The most affrighting images pursued me, and but for the guardian angel whom heaven had vouchsafed in the hour of adversity to send to my relief I should soon have followed my mother to the grave. My unhappy father *did* follow her. Three months had scarcely elapsed after the loss of her who had been the dearest object of his earthly love, ere his sorrows came to an end, and he reached that tranquil shore, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

The death of my father was keenly felt in my now softened state of mind, but my grief for him was much alleviated by an assurance through my sisters that he forgave and blessed me; that my penitence afforded him a ray of joy in the midst of darkness, while faith pictured the brightness of a world to come, in which he should be reunited to the wife of his bosom. Those who watched his dying moments with fondest solicitude least desired to stay his happy flight. There is a peculiar tenderness also in the relation of father and son which rarely subsists

between people of the same sex, and the stroke seemed providential that saved this excellent man from a painful trial which awaited the survivors of his house, in the fall of my second brother. It was but a few months after the decease of his parents that Charles was killed in a skirmish with the King's troops, and inhumanly cut to pieces by some of the rebels, who, coming up to the spot where he lay weltering in his blood, mistook him for an enemy, and wreaked their vengeance on his lifeless corpse.

Glendruid, the peaceful sunny retreat where first I saw the light, and breathed the pure air of heaven, that happy spot, the wild fragrance of whose mountain heath, the romantic beauty of whose rocky beach, first taught my soul to glow with the ardour of liberty, was become a desert. My father gone, "another took his office," and my poor Geraldine and Maria, like our first parents quitting Paradise, led their dreary way hand in hand, not knowing whither to direct their orphan steps.

This uncertainty was not of long continuance.

My eldest brother was a wanderer, and had followed the fortunes of his friend who had lately notified his safe return from America, and invited Harold to join his standard. I heard but once from that interesting person, who wrote to condole with me on my domestic afflictions, with a pathos which proved how truly he could feel them. In that only letter which I ever received from him, he mentioned that his affairs did not prosper, that anxiety and want threatened to be his portion during some time, while ultimate success was extremely doubtful. He had, however, devoted himself to the cause, and was resolved to finish the sacrifice, but, aware of the dangers that surrounded him, he besought me to employ whatever influence I might possess with my brother, to deter him from encouning the perils which he saw encompassing his own destiny.

Geraldine was taken by my aunt Courtenay to the sweet retirement of Penrhüdlyn, in North Wales, and Maria was warmly invited by a distant relation, who was an opulent man, and agent to several noblemen and gentlemen of

large fortune, some of whom frequently visited at his house in the north of Ireland. My sisters had often been asked to the elegant mansion of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, but had hitherto declined their invitations, from disinclination on my mother's part to disturb the contentment of her daughters' minds, by sending them to mingle in scenes of gayer life, which naturally awaken youthful eyes to the deficiencies of their own homes, and create more pain by the comparison between wealth and poverty than occasional glimpses into the dwellings of luxury and abundance are enabled to requite.

But at present the case was very different. Maria had no longer a home; and though it was a heart-breaking trial to separate from Geraldine, she had no alternative. Too poor to live independently, and too much overcome by recent calamities to plan for themselves, my sisters now suffered their kind friends to judge for them, and each gratefully accepted the proffered asylum, which promised to supply every tender consolation likely to alleviate the sense of their misfortunes.

The dispersion of my family, and their removal from the neighbourhood of Glendruid, prevented me from hearing much of my former companions. My sisters purposely avoided political topics, from the fear of implicating those whom they would have been shocked to endanger; and confined themselves to expressing their anxiety for Harold, respecting whose fate they were entirely ignorant.

Time rolled on. I hated my profession more and more, and frequently tried the patience of my uncle, whose forbearance was invincible, or he could never have borne with my forgetfulness and want of method. All my leisure moments were passed with my cousin, who became the depository of every thought, and whose admirable judgment was continually employed in rectifying my errors. We read, we walked, we conversed together, and Gerald never let slip an opportunity of demonstrating the absurdity of my former conduct, and awakening my mind to exertions of a better kind.

During this period, Irish affairs were so unsettled, as to cause much solicitude for the friends

who remained in their own country. Frequent attempts were made by the rebels to disturb the government, and many of the leaders were taken up. It may be naturally imagined that I felt no small disquietude at an unusual length of silence on the part of my sisters. At length letters arrived, and I opened them with a trembling at heart, which proved too sure an omen of their contents. It appeared by reference to preceding communications which had never reached my hands, that former packets had either miscarried or been intercepted, and I now learned for the first time, that Harold's dear friend, and I may say my own, for I loved him much, whose virtues were worthy of a happier fate, had paid the penalty of rebellion, and the forfeit was his life.

Harold had been captured with him, and would have probably shared his sad destiny, but it was not so decreed. The hardships which my poor brother had undergone in following the fortunes of one whom he loved better than his own existence, proved too much for a frame originally delicate; and the anguish of his mind

during an imprisonment, in which he was denied all access to his friend, brought on a fever of the brain, which terminated in settled melancholy of the most interesting nature.

No longer accountable, and no longer to be feared, he was liberated as one incapable of mischief, and his room was wanted for crowds, who in those dreary days of proscription and distrust, were daily poured into every place of confinement in Ireland.

Harold disappeared when his prison doors were thrown open, and no effort to trace him had been hitherto successful.

There is a point of excitement beyond which it would seem that the feelings cease to be affected. Were it not so, life could hardly sustain the burthen of woe which falls to the lot of some mortals. I felt benumbed by the quick succession of misfortunes. My mother had drained the sluices of grief, and I fell into a stupor which appeared to paralyze my faculties. How long this torpid state of inaction might have lasted I cannot tell, if other scenes and occupations had not thrown me into a new

current of thought, and delivered me from myself.

A summons was sent to Gerald and me, desiring that we should meet my uncle in his study, and I obeyed the order, fully persuaded that I was going to receive my dismissal, against the justice of which I had not a word to object, as I really felt that I must be an incumbrance. Yet the idea of being now forced to exertion, and turned from the hospitable roof which had hitherto sheltered me, roused some alarm. So little did I care for life, that I could have laid it down with pleasure, if a sort of shudder had not thrilled as the image of an offended Deity would suggest itself, and the "dread of something after death," rush upon my mind, and retard the half formed purpose, from completion. Some literary pursuit might be congenial, I thought, to my taste, but I had no energy to determine what it should be, nor to take the necessary steps for commencing any new scheme of life.

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me from my uncle's presence. Gerald and I presented ourselves together, and found my uncle waiting for us. He desired us to sit down, and addressed us in the following manner, accompanied by a smile of such complacent good humour, as dispelled my fears before he began to speak:

"Nephews, I wish to speak to you," said he. "I have lately been so urgently solicited to embark a part of my capital in the fur trade, that I am induced to try the experiment; but as my answer to the proposal which I have just received to that effect must depend on you, I have called you here for the purpose of asking whether you will enter into my views, and condemn yourselves willingly to a temporary banishment for my sake. It is necessary that I should be able to put confidence in the agents whom I employ, as I must remain myself at Quebec; but if you both feel disposed to gratify me by encountering Hudson's Bay for a period of three years, I will send you thither with liberal salaries. At Prince of Wales's Fort you will not find much to allure the senses,

but, supplied as you shall be with books, you may employ yourselves to much advantage. At your time of life three years will pass swiftly by, and I shall, if I live, be glad to reward a faithful discharge of your duty in these frozen regions by establishing you in partnership upon your return. You are young, and ought to endeavour after independence. You are blessed with abilities which should not be allowed to become useless through want of employment. You, my poor Albert, have been much tried of late, and I have spared you for a season; but I should not be the true friend I desire to prove myself were I to indulge you any longer in unavailing regrets. We are not permitted to mourn the dead, so as to forget what we owe to the living. Brace up the cords of your heart, and make an effort to become a valuable member of society. I would not send you *alone* into the desert which I now propose as your habitation; but in company with Gerald your time may be spent both agreeably and profitably, gliding past you like the weaver's shuttle. Give me your answer this evening, and if you deter-

mine on the undertaking, prepare to leave me as soon as the requisite arrangements for your journey can be completed."

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Our reply was communicated by Gerald, and my uncle seemed much pleased by our cheerful acquiescence in his scheme. Through his benevolent consideration we were furnished with every species of accommodation which could soften the rigours of that tedious winter of the soul as well as body, which we were about to encounter, and he promised to send us a half yearly package, containing whatever might be most interesting and agreeable in our absence from the civilized world.

CHAPTER X.

My cousin's well regulated mind beheld in this unexpected turn of affairs a providential disposition, opening to his view the certain power of providing for the comfort of his mother and sisters. What Gerald called providence, was fortune in my vocabulary. I had sisters also, but my nerves were unstrung, and my activity palsied. I saw nothing with hope or encouragement, because I was not sustained by that staff which is the only prop of human weakness. I was an unbeliever; that is to say, I neither knew what I believed or disbelieved, as my real feelings were resolvable into a general repugnance to authority, and a rooted prejudice, which had been carefully infused into my mind, against whatever came recommended by

the wisdom of experience. The flippancy of ignorance passed with me for inborn genius; and nothing seemed reason in my eyes which required to be substantiated by the slow process of induction. The arguments which I loved were such as burst upon the view like Minerva from the head of Jove—a brilliant fable; and my understanding was so perverted by sophistry and presumption, that I beheld every object through a false medium. Happily for myself a change awaited me.

The necessary preparatives being finished, we took leave, and set forward upon our adventure. Arrived at our destination the mighty features of that gigantic wilderness by which we were surrounded imparted the first impression which I had ever felt of my utter insignificance. The emmet which labours up the side of yonder tiny hillock, containing myriads of that diminutive race, appears an animal of size and importance when compared with individual man in the vastness of expanse which now lay before me, wherever the eye could reach. Beyond the fortress, which was to be our dwelling, nature

held her silent reign, undisturbed by the jarring restlessness of human kind; and within the gloomy building, which looked more like a prison than a great mercantile factory, a few animal machines already dwelt, who seemed to have merely retained sufficient resemblance to the ordinary sons of Adam, to execute the trust of barter and exchange with the Indians who brought furs for sale.

These men took no pleasure in any species of intellectual pursuit. Not a book was to be seen amongst them. Brandy and tobacco were the luxuries which they enjoyed at home, and the stimulus of the chase the only resource that presented itself to occupy them abroad. In such society Gerald and I could not take any delight, and we therefore never mingled in it beyond what our duty required. Our employment was to act as intermediate agents between the Company and these *operatives*, whose business was of a more active sort, for which their coarse habits and hardy constitutions fitted them.

We lived almost entirely to ourselves, and when the routine of daily occupation had been

brought into train, and the simple wants of animal existence briefly satisfied, *time*, that curse or blessing of mankind, according to the use that is made of it, would have lain a heavy weight upon my hands, had Gerald's resources of mind not supplied oil for its wheels. Yet I was not at first prepared to taste of those resources nor benefit by their fertility. I had need of schooling to *unlearn* my former creeds, ere I was fitted to enjoy better things.

In the clear azure of that frosty firmament—in the interminable spread of that mighty ocean—in the stupendous vast of trackless forests, and the unbounded stretch of plains which had known neither enclosure nor division, my vanity found a salutary check. Gerald and I were gazing on the finest moon I ever saw, which threw its gentle lustre on a world of stillness, the silence of which was unbroken except by the distant howling of those wild inhabitants whose soft cloathing furnished our only pretext for disturbing their dominion. The sublime in nature gives rise to sublimity of thought, and the mind soars in contemplating the works of Omnipo-

tence, undefaced by the puny contrivance of mortal creatures.

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that Thou visitest him?" exclaimed my companion. "Alas!" I replied, "man 'is shorn of his beams' in such a place as this, where intellect has no subjects on which to employ itself."

"How can you say so?" answered Gerald. "Surely the grandeur of that lofty arch, studded with bright worlds, and enlightened by glorious suns; the majesty of that expanded ocean which lies before us, with all the stupendous in nature, would exhaust higher powers of intelligence than are bestowed on man to comprehend. Angels might be puzzled here. Yet the starry host are visible to our senses; the wonders of vegetation are spread beneath our feet; and the magnificent ocean roars in our ears; but how little do we know about them? 'Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds; the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?' No.

Though this is the favourite haunt of meditation, where mind, disentangled from the paltry pursuits which occupy the sons of men in busier scenes, expatiates in all its strength and clearness, how bounded is its flight! how limited its experience! Is it surprising, then, that the truths of religion, which are objects of inference, sensibility, faith, and hope, not of sight and touch, should elude our grasp when we attempt to bring them down to the vulgar level of our puerile reason? Those, too, who are fond of unbelief; who hug scepticism, and affect to cast aside all which cannot be explained by sense, forget the numberless facts of nature, now explained and developed by the progress of science, which were once unknown. Thus the infidel is foiled at both ends; the argument of incomprehensibility being equally applicable to the physical and metaphysical world; and on the other hand, discoveries daily proving that the dark and mysterious of one period becomes understood and familiar at another."

"I wish," said I, "that I could feel and reason as you do. I confess to be aware of a

great difference in my mind, since this solitude has extinguished an anxiety to shine, which is so natural to the human character; but when I reflect on the difficulties and contrarieties of the Bible, I find it impossible to realize those happy views which you derive from its perusal."

"At least," said Gerald, "we will try. Let us make good use of our banishment; and after giving our minds faithfully to the task, even though you should still retain your present opinions, you will not have to reproach yourself with being ignorant of what can be said on the opposite side."

"You religionists," answered I, "however acute your understandings, always slide into arguments derived from scripture, the inspiration of which is the very point at issue. I never met with any one of your side who did not do so, and therefore, I own, I have been little moved by their arguments."

"I might retort," said Gerald, "if retaliation were argument, and assert that no debate upon the evidences of scripture is ever fairly managed by you sceptics, who deny the weight of

testimony unless it accord with your own preconceptions. But you have made a sweeping accusation; may I ask who has impressed you so unfavourably towards the believer's creed?"

"Oh, fifty people! I cannot immediately recollect; but piety is certainly much in want of able advocates," answered I.

"Name one of the fifty; and I will ask no more," replied my antagonist; "whoever he is, he shall be allowed to stand as representative of all the rest, who are perhaps, like Falstaff's enemies, habited in buckram."

"Well, I will name Mr. Hill, then," said I.

"Mr. Hill," answered Gerald, "is an elderly man, and a clergyman, accustomed to be treated with reverence, and not called upon *at sight* for the reasons of his belief. There are few men whose temper is not affected by hearing all which they account valuable, though upon topics of less interest than the concerns of salvation in a future life, rudely contradicted and overthrown by the cavils of ignorant usurpers. How would a physician bear to be told by a set of boys just let out of school, that medicine is of no use; that

bark cannot strengthen, nor antimony allay fever? How would an admiral, whose brows were wreathed with laurel in successful conflict with the foes of his country, endure your offering to be his captain without having served a single day in any of the subordinate stages of the profession, or taken a single lesson in navigation? Yet your late course has just been as idle; as much divested of right reason, as you are ready to acknowledge is the case with those instances which I have just proposed. To be either a sound metaphysician, or an able politician, requires training, reading, thinking. An extraordinary genius appears now and then, whose precocious wisdom supersedes the slow process of instruction, and anticipates the conclusions of experience; but such examples are rare, and even when they do occur, sobriety is ever a characteristic of the few who are destined to be eminently useful to mankind. If this quiet attribute be wanting, there will be nothing steady in the march of talent, but a spring forward may be followed in the next moment by a

retrograde plunge. Progress requires regularity and self-possession."

As Gerald finished speaking we were interrupted, but I resolved that, were it only to prove the superiority of my own reasoning, I would submit to listen tranquilly to his; and from this moment I suffered him to prescribe my studies. My uncle's liberality had supplied us largely with books, and the subject of each day's reading was discussed in our following conversations. It was not long before I found that every difficulty which I supposed insurmountable, simply because I never sought an answer, could be met with an argument, at least as rational as mine; and I began to perceive, in the acute reasoning of my friend, that the religious side of the question was to the full as subtile as the cavils of the sceptic. Metaphysics, I discovered, did not belong, as I imagined, exclusively to the brain of an unbeliever, and if some points eluded mortal grasp, and could neither be brought by the force of human intellect nor the aids of illustration into contact with my understanding, I was driven to acknowledge

that my own ideas were not more clear or precise than those which were opposed to them. When on one side I maintained, for example, that man was no other than a mere irresponsible machine, acted upon by necessity, and drawn in chains to his fate—*because* the Divine Being, if prescience were one of his attributes, could not foresee that which was contingent; but whatever He sees, however distant in time and remote in probability to *our* finite view, must be fixed and inevitable, or it could not be foreseen.

I began to falter in my dogmatism when my cousin talked of the folly of applying limited expression to unlimited ideas, and perplexing the mind with difficulties of its own making. "Away," said Gerald, "with past, present, and to come, which imply succession of *time*, and belong to earth—but have nothing to do with that God with whom 'a thousand years are but as one day.' Prescience with *us*, means present knowledge of things yet to come, while the term is utterly inapplicable to Divinity. *His* prescience is *vision*. To the Almighty all is *present*. With us actions are probable or improbable, contin-

gent or certain, with God they are already performed, *motives* are actions, the unseen is visible, that which is *to be* on earth has *happened* in heaven. Now this view of the subject, though it does not let us behind the scene, nor expound the counsels of the Most High, altogether annihilates the puzzle in which we involve ourselves by talking of *before* and *after* as applied to God. Consider *all* as *coincident* in His sight, and the idea of human liberty is certainly simplified. The motive, which is not to arise till long after you have passed from the earth, in the breast of a descendant yet unborn, is *seen* by your Creator. It lies in a map beneath his feet, and requires only to be looked at. If you adopt this reasoning, you will at least find that your argument drops to the ground, though you may not be satisfied with that which I give you as a substitute."

I confessed that a new idea was here presented to me, which I was eager to follow up. I loved reasoning, and could not receive the consolations of a system which had startled me with its incredibility. Removed now from the

interruptions of life, and the desire of declaiming, I found leisure, and stillness favourable to contemplation. While far removed from the world in which the little strife of tongues and petty sophisms of intellect obtain credit, my heart was purified and softened. I loved to commune with Heaven, and began to experience the calm repose of an humble teachable spirit.

Those who have never quitted the highways of life, nor ceased to listen to the "busy hum of men," can form no conception of the revolution effected on a thinking mind by the influence of such a solitude as I now inhabited. Till the fact is experimentally proved, it is impossible to believe how much our poor human compound is made up of pride, vanity, and love of opposition. The desert is a faithful mirror, and teaches him who gazes on his own image there, how different it is from the same figure clothed in the varying trappings of changeful taste, fashion, or caprice. There is no factitious standard to consult in the wilderness; no admiring voice to flatter. I felt as if transported to the castle of truth.

My reason, without being weaker, became gradually more tractable and dispassionate. Things presented themselves in a new guise to my apprehension, and I soon looked back with pain on a time when I had used the most strenuous efforts to inveigle others more ignorant and deceivable than myself, and persuade them into principles of which I was not even then more than half convinced. I thought of the mountain-musters, at which my credulous countrymen were assembled, to be taught the most certain method of achieving their own destruction, of families left to starve, of industry despised, contentment banished. Was the happiness of the people *really* my object, in giving my time and efforts to subvert order and overturn authority?

Self-examination was now sincere, and the answers were humiliating. The shades of those who had fallen victims in the cause which I espoused, and then deserted, seemed to shake their gory locks at me; and I had no comfort in thinking that I would have staid at home if I could have commanded power to do more mis-

chief than my small influence permitted. Let me not be accused of egotism for dwelling on these reflections. I would try to be of use to those who are still led away by false views, and it is only by describing the unhappiness of my own self-upbraiding that I can hope to deter such as are young and easily duped from following in my footsteps.

When far advanced in such thoughts as I have described, I occasionally gratified Gerald by avowing the change which he had wrought in my mind, and one day expressed my sorrow at the disparity between the evil sustained through my means, and any good which a conversion to better feelings might accomplish.

"Away with such a lamentation!" exclaimed Gerald. "Why should not the benefit be as widely diffused as the injury? Exert yourself to obtain independence; riches may follow; and returning to the land of your nativity, you may distribute the blessings of virtue and peace wherever you have been instrumental in sowing the seeds of misery and disorder."

This suggestion acted like a talisman, and

fired my soul with ardour. The harp of my country seemed strung anew in my breast, and wakened me to a cheering impulse of affectionate animation. My health improved, my spirits revived, and I felt warmed by a glow to which I had long been a stranger. The monotony of our lives did not now produce a sense of languor. Gerald had proposed an object, the prospect of attaining which, though distant, was so enlivening that time made no pauses. Books and conversation, intermingled with active exercise, dogs, guns, and chess-board, diversified the passing hours; and day often arrived at its close before I was aware of its being half spent. Such is the necromancy of occupation seasoned by hope.

There are no mile-stones in the desert, and our uniform routine denied materials out of which to weave a varied narrative. The notches in Robinson Crusoe's calendar were his only marks of the division of time, and our employments, though productive of more fulness of mind than I had ever known before, were still only notches, the history of which could not im-

part pleasure beyond the scene of action; and however momentous to ourselves the changes which our minds undergo, we can seldom render them interesting to others. It will, therefore be enough to state, that I learned to perceive the superiority of sound reflection over the irregular starts of intellect which I used previously to dignify with the title of genius, and that I discovered what I had called my *opinions* to be rarely any other than flashes produced by accidental collision, expiring as quickly as they were struck. As a cord stretches farthest for being fastened at one end, so my mind expanded as my youthful Mentor bound it down to fixed principles. The gentle discipline of friendship restrained the wandering, and regulated the confusion of my thoughts; while the acquirement of knowledge produced what is its natural concomitant—self-abasement.

CHAPTER XI.

In a situation so devoid as ours of external interest, small matters were sufficient to produce great excitement. In England the arrival of the post causes little emotion, but we looked with intense impatience for the first tidings from Quebec. The joyful moment came at last. I first devoured two long letters from my sisters, and then broke the seal of one, to which I found the signature of Richard Lovett.

I had been so neglected by all his family, that I immediately supposed some pecuniary embarrassment was the cause of this unexpected revival of intercourse. I was mistaken; and cannot describe my emotion on reading the following words:

"DEAR FITZMAURICE,

"Whether or not you recognized your old

acquaintance Richard Lovett as the person who dropped a paper in your path at Longwood, remains a secret to me; but he it was who prevailed with his confederates to restore your uncle's property. One good turn deserves another. It is your part now to perform an act of friendship; and by its sacred bond—by all that you ever held most dear, I conjure you to lose no time in assisting me. If you required a spur, which I am convinced is not the case, you will act with double diligence when I tell you, that my present unfortunate situation is the consequence of that meeting with you. Had it not been to ensure your safe receipt of the parchments which my companions had stolen from you, I should not have gone to Longwood, and so should not have fallen in with two merchants who were travelling up the country, one of whom was unluckily shot in our rencounter, though not by my hand.

"I am innocent of this crime, whatever may be my guilt on other occasions; but no doubt can exist of the fate which awaits me, and the lasting disgrace which will attach to my family,

if your exertions to save me fail of success. Come to me immediately, if you have any bowels of compassion. You might swear an alibi for me. When you recollect the thousand falsehoods which I used to tell in former days to screen you from discovery at a mountain-muster, you will not, I trust, suffer any idle scruples to prevent you from endeavouring to protect the life of a friend.

"I can explain satisfactorily to you how I was led by circumstances to join the party, my communion with which has been my ruin, and you will not cast off an unhappy being whom an ignominious end stares at this moment in the face. Your uncle has much influence here, both from his wealth and reputation. Use all—use every thing to save your miserable friend,

"RICHARD LOVETT."

My blood congealed with horror, as I held the letter open in my hand; when Gerald, who was finishing one from my uncle, and did not perceive my agitation, read aloud the following paragraph:

"Tell Albert, in my letter to whom I omitted

to mention the circumstance, that some time ago, about three months, I think, after you and he left me, an execution took place here, of two young men, who excited the sympathy of numbers, as they belonged to a higher class than that of ordinary delinquents. The facts for which they suffered were so clearly proved against them, that it is not probable any interference would have procured a mitigation of their sentence; but it was very extraordinary that one of them sent, as I am informed, several times to my house, to inquire for an answer to some letter addressed by him to Albert. These messages did not reach me till the unhappy youth had expiated his offences by a disgraceful end. I was shocked to hear that, as he was led to death, he called in frantic accents on his 'friend Fitzmaurice,' and regret to think that the unfortunate young man suffered without even the slender consolation of a visit to his cell. My dear nephews, let this tragedy impress your hearts. Albert, let none of these misguided men again entice and persuade you from your duty. The theories which they teach are wild, untried, and

incompatible with our human condition. Beware of believing that each succeeding generation must be wiser than the past. It is not so. The canker now at work is as yet in the bud, but the time will come when you, who are young, may yet see the fruits of infidelity in your own favoured land."

I cannot describe how much I was shocked by this awful catastrophe. The idea of poor Lovett's having gone out of the world believing me to be a monster of ingratitude left a most painful impression on my mind; but the case was irremediable, and he, poor fellow, beyond the reach of farther suffering. Lovett's melancholy end was a forcible illustration of the school to which he belonged, and used as such by Gerald, who pointed the moral at my breast with powerful efficacy. It did not escape him that the unfortunate young man grounded his hopes of security on a lie, and called upon me to perjure myself in his cause.

"This is what comes of habitual disregard of religion," said Gerald, "and so it will ever be;

and such are the effects to which your political principles infallibly lead."

"You cannot surely mean," answered I, "to say, that republicanism has any natural affinity with crime, and that a democratic form of government has any necessary connection with dishonesty, or untruth."

"Certainly not," replied Gerald. "You often boast of the virtues of Greece and Rome. Many noble and disinterested acts were performed in both; but you always forget that the religion of the ancient republics, though less pure and perfect than the Christian code, entered operatively into the scheme of life, and influenced every undertaking. The Greeks and Romans endeavoured to propitiate the deities of their worship, and engaged in no enterprize without trying to ascertain the will of their Gods. How different the heartless laxity and indifference of a free-thinker."

"If the pagan worship," said I, "were capable of producing such fruit as you acknowledge, I confess I am still at a loss to see the great pre-eminence of the Christian faith."

"You could not be at any loss," answered Gerald, "if you considered for a moment. We have been comparing the effects of an imperfect but *influential* religion with the fruits of infidelity; not the results of two different systems, *each* believed, and actuating human conduct. I prefer the worship of sticks and stones to that of our own ungovernable self-will; and my uncle's remark is, I believe, a very just one, that though a restless impatience of restraint and total disregard of divine guidance, have characterised individuals in every age of mankind, the French have been the first to introduce a systematic national opposition to the controlling power of religion. He prophecies, you know, that the evil will spread, that, under the specious guise of liberality, atheism, though not actually avowed, will work its way, and that, however retarded for a season, its desolating march will not be arrested. Why is it that all the political assemblies which are daily convened in our own country, even amongst the lowest order of artizans, build their plans on the destruction of religious belief, but because

the downfal of one is essential to the adoption of the other? A man who has faith in his bible maintains some inconvenient doctrines, such as obedience to rulers, honour for kings, submission to parents, and other troublesome fetters, which must be shaken off before any progress can be made in the new light philosophy of politics, taught by Paine and his confederates; and as proof of the fair dealing of our modern teachers, I assure you, on my own knowledge, that when it was suggested, that it was only just to allow questions which struck at the root of every thing sacred or established to be argued at *both* sides, this proposal was over-ruled at a numerous meeting where I was present, and it was decreed in this wise committee, that it would be waste of time to *debate*."

Thus we disputed, and thus every succeeding incident was rendered profitable to me by the sense and virtue of my friend. We had agreed on entering the fort, to separate during some hours of every day. On returning one morning from a lonely ramble, I espied Gerald through the window of a lower apartment seated in the

midst of those boors whom we found on our arrival, and whom we had avoided as much as possible when first we joined them. He was reading from a large volume, to which they listened with fixed attention. I was surprised, but passed on; Gerald followed presently.

"Can I believe my eyes," said I, "or was it you whom I saw in a familiar group with Reid, Malone, and the rest of our 'worshipful society?'"

"Yes," answered Gerald; "and to spare you any farther inquiry or comment, I will anticipate both by telling you the whys and wherefores. Some weeks ago, as I was crossing the square, I heard loud voices and angry words, from the place which the men call the Armoury. I paused, and fearful of a quarrel, entered the scene of combat. There I found Haller and Malone in fierce debate which threatened blows. I interfered, and begged to know the cause of contention. Reid, who was a spectator, informed me that Haller charged Malone with robbing him of powder and shot, which the other denied, swearing 'by his soul' that the ac-

cusation was false. Haller's reply was striking, 'If you swear let it be by something that *is*, and not by what you are telling us every day is only a bit of priest-craft. Where is your soul, I'd be glad to know?'—a fight would have followed if Reid and I had not interposed. The ammunition was found where Haller really had left it, but the angry words had left a sting which was not to be extracted in a moment.

"From that time I resolved on a new line of conduct, and took shame to myself for the selfish part which I had acted in withdrawing from all communion with these men to whom I might perchance be useful. I found them pleased with the interest which I expressed in their reconciliation, and at length to oblige me they shook hands. I next ventured upon serious topics, which I perceived they were delighted with. Poor Malone's account of himself affected me. 'Sir,' said he, 'you have had better teachers than fell to my lot. My mother indeed was a holy woman, and the only prayer I know in the world she taught me when I was an infant; but she died of a broken heart when

I was only four years old, and my father was a profligate, who never uttered the name of God but to blaspheme. I was let run wild, and be acquainted with whoever I liked. At last, when forced to do something or starve, I went to work, and fell among idle apprentices, who used to meet every Saturday night and sit up till late in the Sabbath to read Paine's Age of Reason, and other books which finished me entirely. I got entangled in the business going on in Ireland, and was glad to run for my life. When I landed in America I had the luck to meet a young gentleman, one Mr. Lovett, whom I knew, and a good young man he was to me. He gave me a trifle of ready assistance, and spoke for me to the captain of the vessel that he went out in, who kindly recommended me to one of the fur company, a worthy man, who sent me here just before you came to the fort; and I never had a hard word with any one since I am at Hudson's Bay till this misunderstanding with Jack Haller, for though I've been bad enough many ways, I never was quarrel-

some in my life; so, Sir, that's the short and the long of my story.'

"Malone's narrative struck me. Here was a poor fellow, naturally gentle at heart, with a lurking desire to be better if he knew how. He expressed in ruder phrase," added Gerald, "the very sentiment that you and I have often felt to be true, on the influence of solitude, for he finished his brief tale with the remark that 'desolate places make a man thoughtful, especially when far removed from all that he loves or values;' and I determined to cultivate him with a hope of steadying his views, and making some solid impression on his mind. On farther inquiry, I have learned that he was employed by several of the people with whom you were once intimate, and engaged in their treasonable correspondences as a missionary to different parts of the country. I have spent a part of every day for some weeks past, in reading and conversing with him. At first I found the task discouraging, as he was very sceptically inclined, and completely armed with all the common-

place of the infidel school, but I met his objections with coolness, and perceived with pleasure that I began to gain ground, though slowly. Whatever arrested his attention in our debates has, I conclude, been imparted to his companions, for a few days ago I had the unspeakable satisfaction of receiving a petition signed by all the men, entreating to be admitted to our lecture."

"And pray why did you conceal from me what so much gratified you?" said I.

"Because," answered Gerald, "your own mind has been undergoing change, and I resolved not to mention the circumstances which accident has drawn from me, till I could be sure of your sympathy in the pleasure which they afford me. It was very culpable to avoid these poor fellows, and you will, I trust, join me now in taking a friendly interest in their welfare."

I really did so from my heart, and felt a peculiar bond attach me to Malone. There was a similarity between his situation and mine, which touched me. He had a mother at whose knee he learned whatever good his infant mind

had imbibed, and who died of a broken heart. That mother too was the being whom he had loved best on earth, and whose memory had the power of calling forth the best feelings of his nature.

· This was my case. He also had been led away by evil counsellors, and had become a rebel and an infidel. So had I. Prompted by these resemblances, I found comfort in talking to Malone, who was a very intelligent though uneducated man; and as we were both sincerely desirous of finding truth, we assisted each other in the search after it. Had I been in a situation that furnished amusement, my mind would probably not have discovered this susceptibility to benevolent feeling; but objects, as I have elsewhere observed, acquire an interest and importance in solitude unknown in busier scenes. As every passing sail, nay, even the lighting of a bird upon the rigging, is matter of anxious excitement to the weary mariner, who plies his monotonous way over the wide world of waters, so the smallest incident had power to stimulate in the silence and seclusion of our fort.

At length the day arrived, when, instead of a ruffian band of illiterate men, we saw ourselves surrounded by a group of well conditioned companionable people; softened into all the charities of kindly intercourse, through the single and sublime influence of religion. So true is it that real civilization springs from the heart, that Christianity alone, by converting our associates, inspired gentle manners, and planted the fellowship of brothers amongst a set of beings who till now had lived in good humour or discord, just as the chances of animal want brought together or separated their interests.

Time learned to speed faster than ever, and with magical rapidity heralded the glad tidings of another courier from Quebec.

CHAPTER XII.

As the angel troubled the waters of Siloam, so did a letter from Maria disturb the tranquillity of my days. Joy and impatience are tame words to express the rapture which I felt at the tidings from home, or my eagerness to fly to the scene of them; but my sister's letter shall tell its own story.

" What I am going to communicate, dearest Albert, is of a nature so unexpected, that I know not how to set about telling it to you; and I have sat looking at this sheet of paper for half an hour without being able to write a single word. Yet I must open my heart, for I require all the support which you and dear Geraldine can give, to sustain my faltering courage in the new part which I am preparing to act.

"Without farther preamble I will proceed, and first carry back your recollection to some of the complaints which I made to you on my arrival at Craigallan. Do you remember my telling you that my dear friends, though full of tenderness and consideration, would not allow me to indulge in solitude. Mrs. Reynolds did not insist on my going out with her, but she would not permit me to absent myself from the social circle under her own roof; and as we were seldom without visitors, I found the effort to be cheerful often painful in the extreme. But it was my part to submit, and attempt what was proposed through affection, to restore my spirits.

"I used, however, to steal away, whenever I could, to enjoy the luxury of a lonely ramble along the romantic margin of this beautiful lake. One day I feared being late for dinner, and crossed a meadow which I knew would take me into the high road, and so home by the shortest way; but I was pursued by a cow, and so terrified that I took refuge in the remains of an old castle, and mounting to the highest part of a mouldering wall, gained perfect security, but

found myself completely imprisoned, as my enemy seemed little inclined to lose sight of her victim.

"I had been in this foolish situation for some time without seeing any chance of escape, when a travelling carriage turned into the road at a little distance. I called aloud, and waved a handkerchief, in hope of being observed by a servant who rode behind. I was not disappointed; but the man instead of coming directly to my assistance, stopped the postilions, and a gentleman stepped hastily out of the chariot. Lord Clonmore, who I knew was expected by Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds, was my gallant deliverer. I felt not a little abashed by our unceremonious introduction to each other. My misadventure, though not free from danger, was more ridiculous than sentimental; and had not even an air of romance to rescue it from being the subject of great merriment. Lord Clonmore was called my 'Knight,' while I was a 'distressed damsel immured in a tower, and craving aid from my brave defender.'

"Thus, by a trifling accident, all the formid-

able barriers to acquaintance between a retiring novice and a stranger of rank were levelled at our first interview; and I found myself in a day or two quite at ease with a person who had been for some time the bugbear of my imagination. Unaccustomed to associate with the great, I had a thousand foolish notions of form and affectation, all spectres of my own fancy; and a short period was sufficient not only to allay my childish apprehension, but make me fully sensible of our noble guest's distinguished merit. Every day afforded me fresh opportunity, in the domestication of a country-house where Lord Clonmore was truly loved and valued, to admire his worth and excellent sense; so entirely did he appear divested of pretension, that I felt no restraint in his company; gentle, rational, and polite, he mingled in the family circle as if he had never moved in a higher sphere, and I often wondered at finding myself engaged in conversation with an Earl just as familiarly as with Mr. Reynolds; still, however, such was the gulph which separated us that I felt like a pigmy addressing a giant.

" After a visit at Craigallan of six weeks, Lord Clonmore took his leave; and such was the interest which he expressed in my sorrows, such the goodness of heart with which he endeavoured to divert and assuage them, that when he drove from the door I felt to have lost a real friend, and sighing to think how few such an unprotected orphan had any right to look for in a thorny world, retired to a dear little dressing-room, of which my kind Mrs. Reynolds allows me undisputed possession, and calls my ' Cell.' Judge of my astonishment on entering my retreat to find a letter on my table sealed with a coronet; and share, if you can, the surprise and emotion with which I read the inclosed.

" ' May I be forgiven, amiable Maria, if, in the moment of departure, I venture upon a subject, which, while I had the happiness of being near you, was repressed, through feeling for affliction too genuine in its nature, not equally to command my sympathy and respect. Your losses have been grievous, and sweet is the tenderness with which you deplore them. Yet

grief ought not to be immortal, and the most fortunate destiny which I can imagine, is reserved for him who may be allowed the flattering prospect of mitigating yours.

" 'Maria, I am many years older than you, and it would ill suit my age tc employ the language of a youthful lover; but as similarity of taste and disposition has powerful effect in diminishing apparent disparities, I am bold enough to encourage the fond hope that you will not consider the difference between your time of life and mine an insurmountable barrier to my happiness.

" 'I am, as you know, a widower. My first engagement, contracted while I was too young to judge for myself, was a sacrifice to the deities of vulgar adoration — Vanity and Ambition. My two sons are amply provided for, and, though fifty summers have passed over my head, and as life advances I feel the emptiness of what the world calls pleasure, I can still delight in such society as a mind like yours knows how at once to appreciate and improve.

" 'Without farther attempt to prove myself

worthy of the good fortune which I solicit, I here offer a heart and hand devoted to you; and entreat in honest sincerity your permission to re-visit Craigallan, and repeat in person the sentiments of unfeigned esteem and admiration with which I subscribe myself, &c.

'CLONMORE.'

"I cannot describe the agitation of my mind. Gratitude and wonder divided my feelings, and I hastened to throw myself on the friendship of Mrs. Reynolds to guide my conduct. Nothing could exceed the generous sympathy of my kind friends, but I was distressed by a thousand conflicting emotions. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds entered warmly into the interests of Lord Clonmore, and represented him as calculated to make any woman possessed of taste enough to estimate his fine character, supremely happy. The absence of every sordid motive, of which attachment towards a being so undeserving as myself furnished flattering testimony, corroborated the picture drawn by this excellent pair, and their wishes have prevailed over my uncertainty. Many were the sinkings of heart which I expe-

rienced, however, ere I summoned resolution to send an answer, in which, after blotting and destroying half a dozen sheets of paper, I awkwardly expressed my sense of that disinterested affection which I felt unworthy to inspire, and unable to requite. I said how utterly unsuited I felt myself to shine in a sphere of life so superior to that in which my humble lot was cast, but ended by an assurance of the truest regard, and a wish that I were capable of proving its sincerity by contributing to the happiness of one so justly entitled to all that I could return.

"Oh Albert, when I had so far committed myself by sending my letter to the post-office, what dreadful doubts and fears succeeded! I had always been taught to believe that equality of rank and fortune were desirable in marriage, and my own heart had always told me that nothing short of devoted and mutual attachment, founded on intimate acquaintance, similarity of pursuits, and sympathy of character, could insure that union which was indispensable in my idea of the conjugal tie. I had often thought that to contract this sacred engagement uninflu-

enced by these all-powerful motives, was an act of criminality, because a solemn vow is made at the altar, and we tempt ourselves to commit perjury by promising more than we are sure of being able to perform. I asked myself whether the grateful acknowledgment of such preference as had been shewn me, was motive strong enough to sway my mind, and tortured myself with reproaching my own inconsistency, worldliness, and vanity. It was in vain that I listened to the praises of Lord Clonmore, and felt how sincerely my best judgment confirmed them: equally vain the honest dislike which I felt of those external honours which to me seemed no other than an encumbrance. All my reasoning appeared but sophistry; all the persuasion of my friends nothing better than a mistaken effort to gild my chains. I was miserable; yet I had not acted unconscientiously. My letter spoke no more than the truth; and earnestly did I wish that my cold and measured phrase, my quaint unpractised language might convince Lord Clonmore how unfit I was for an exalted station, and give me back the liberty which I had fettered;

but no such freedom was in store for me. As soon as it was possible to have an answer, I received the kindest ever penned, from which I must transcribe a paragraph:

" 'You talk of unfitness for a higher sphere than that in which you have been placed by Providence. I repeat your words only to oppose them. Is it possible that Maria can have adopted the common place notion that a coronet, or the accident of a few paltry thousands can infuse nobility of soul? The thought is so unworthy of her whose heart would dignify a throne, that modesty which blinds where self is concerned, can alone account for the expression of a sentiment thus misplaced. I consider those 'unfitnesses' which terrify your gentle spirit, as the highest assurance of qualification for what you call an 'exalted station.' I once concurred in the low minded views of family aggrandisement, and permitted myself to be sold for the miserable purpose of adding acres to acres, and emblazoning my name, with new decorations from the Heralds' Office; but I will not go farther in the details of an alliance which

lasted long enough to prove the futility of earthly splendour in conferring peace of mind. Maria, you have been educated in the school of virtue and true feeling, far remote from the selfish maxims of a calculating world. If I am not much mistaken you will never be tempted into its idle mazes, which exhibited shadows for realities. The real blessings of life are few, and may be enjoyed by all classes throughout existence. What is the proudest monarch but a poor pageant, concealing the miseries to which flesh is heir, under the sickly glare of outward shew, if he want health, affection, and a "conscience void of offence?" The same infirmities bow down the prince and the peasant to a common grave; and that is a sorry distinction which rests its fame, while here, on an ermined robe, and gem-studded crown. You will not be displeased with this serious tone, even while I address you on the subject which is next my heart. Marriage is something more in Maria's eyes than a procession of new coaches and gorgeous liveries. I have some experience, and am convinced that the only advantage of rank which a

man or woman of real worth may boast, is the power of rendering virtue fashionable. A virtuous court gives the key-note, and every chord throughout the series of society vibrates reponsively. Rank is, therefore, accountable, because man is a creature of imitation. There is an opinion afloat that little good is to be found in many of those who are called, by courtesy, the great, and I fear that there may be too much foundation for the opinion, but I am happy in knowing some bright exceptions, and Maria shall contribute her aid to shew the world what a countess ought to be.'

"Are not these sentiments, my brother, a promise of all that I can wish, and much more than I deserve? Oh that I may be enabled to fulfil the expectations which are formed of me! I distrust myself, because I know how many have failed in the performance of their duty, when surrounded by the allurements of the world. Pray for me, my Albert. Mrs. Reynolds desires to add a line, and I will say FAREWELL."

"I take Maria's pen to give the testimony of

impartial friendship to the excellence of him who will, ere long, become the brother of my dear Albert. That Lord Clonmore possesses taste and penetration to feel all the beauty of your sister's lovely character and appreciate its merit as it deserves, is not a bad criterion of his own; and I will venture to assure you, that never was there a fairer prospect of happiness than is promised by this union. Maria will adorn, rather than be adorned by her elevation. I would not suffer your sister to cloud her sunny page by a word of pain, but have reserved to myself the last intelligence which has reached us of the dear wanderer.

" Harold was lately recognized near Glendruid. His appearance was deeply interesting, and indicated, what I fear is but too true, derangement of a melancholy and hopeless kind. He was heard to mutter the names of those beloved ones, who are no more, as he roamed amongst the rock, but he vanished like a spirit. We lost not a moment after receiving notice of him, in the endeavour to bring him here; but before Mr. Reynolds, who would not employ a

deputy in this sacred task, reached the spot where he had been seen, Harold had quitted the neighbourhood, and no trace of him has been since discovered. We thought that poor Norah Kelly might know something of him, but she has also disappeared, and we conclude, that finding the solitude of Glendruid too dreadful after the last of her friends had departed, she is probably gone to beg through the country."

What an unsettling of mind did these letters produce! On the day preceding their arrival I was a quiet anchorite in the wilderness. Maria and her brilliant destiny; Harold and his dubious fate, now divided my soul, and a burning impatience to return to Ireland took such hold upon my thoughts, that all the influence of my guardian spirit could scarcely restrain my flight. The world and its charms began to stir up a tempest in my imagination which pictured scenes of living delights, in which I might hope to bear a part; and I longed to be transported into the midst of those splendid joys which are the fruitful creation of youthful fancy. How often do we believe in the extinction of propen-

sities which are but reposing in their torpid state, waiting for the first genial ray to warm them into re-animation.

"I congratulate you with all my heart," said Gerald; "and you must do the same by me, for I, too, have had a Mercury from Cupid's court. My only sister Gertrude is going to be married to Arthur Somers, of whom I have often spoken to you; and though he has neither rank, nor fortune above mere competency, I would not exchange him for any brother-in-law in Europe."

"How shall we ever subside into rational beings," said I, "after this enchantment? I confess that I shall be too restless to plod on in this dull round any longer. I *must* go to London and see Maria. Are you not longing to return home?"

"Yes," answered Gerald; "but to what purpose should either of us indulge the wish? Remember what my uncle says, 'that poverty is a crime in the great world, and the sin of requiring patronage is not easily forgiven.' If we have patience, and finish out our term of banishment, we may turn our *eclipse* to good account.

Independence will make me useful to my poor relations, and your rich ones will not find you a burthen."

The idea of my own situation never occurred to me, and now that it was presented as in a looking-glass, the reflection was not cheering. Gerald often acted the part of *damper*, and though, upon the present occasion, I was more refractory than usual, I began at last to perceive that even if I could command a balloon to set me down at my sister's door, it would require some hardihood to introduce myself into the presence of her husband. My gay aspirations, like the race of a water-mill, being thus dammed up, had nothing for it but to flow back again, and I was obliged to content myself with reading my letters over and over, till they were worn out.

If those who live in the crowd derive pleasure from continual variety, the extent of surface diminishes the depth, while the recluse is recompensed by the intensity of his enjoyments for the scanty number of them; but time, which smooths the sharpest edges of disappointment,

moderates also the maddest transports; in the former case we become resigned, in the latter tranquil; and in both we learn, that violent stimulants are neither natural nor salutary. At length I resumed my daily tasks, and all my dreams were not of coaches and coronets.

When somewhat sobered, I was forced into an involuntary comparison between Gerald and myself. While I was tossed by every breeze, a prey to impulse, and suffering the extremes of useless excitement at every turn of events, that admirable young man, though possessed of the liveliest feeling, lost no way, but held on his calm and onward course, a blessing and an example to all who could benefit by observing his actions.

Our men, who but a year before knew little gratification beyond the indulgence of animal ease, were now seen taking sweet counsel together, and poring over the sacred volume as misers count their store. Nothing could be more interesting than to watch the progress of their minds, and attend to the varieties which even the small number of our companions exhibited.

One of them, who was a very subtile, sagacious fellow, came to me one day, and said, "Mr. Fitzmaurice, Hayes and I have had a bout of reasoning last night, and I'd be glad, Sir, that you'd tell me which is right and which is wrong. Hayes says, that before Mr. Courtenay took him in hand, he believed that his soul was nothing more than as if when all the parts of a watch are put together and regulated, the wheels balanced, and the springs put in their places, they begin to strike and tell the time; and *still* he thinks that there is nothing absurd in such a belief; but since I have had time to reflect, and a good teacher to guide me, I see things very differently from what I did, and put myself often in mind, Sir, of the blind man restored to sight, who saw trees as men walking; my eyes are open, yet I may make mistakes at first: but what I said to Hayes, Sir, was, that if he was to put particles of matter together till doomsday, as he cannot find thought in the parts, it cannot be found in the whole, and if it could, there would be an end to all reasoning on modes and substances, "because," says I, "in your way of settling the

business, what is called modification or arrangement would possess properties different from the things modified and arranged, which is impossible; and as to your watch, it is not a case in point, though it is *in* a case, for no new quality is added to the wheels when they are set in motion; motion does not grow out of the arrangement, but is distinct from it, and must be applied from without, or the perfect watch will no more inform you of the time, than the spring and wheels and pivots were able to do when they lay separately in the work-shop; but when wound up and set going, it is all according to the natural laws of motion, that certain effects should follow, which will cease when the moving cause comes to a stop. Then, Sir, I went on to say, that if this was as plain to him as to me, the infidel's argument for annihilation would fall to the ground, for if the soul is not matter, which it *is* not, because thought occupies no space, and if it is not modification of matter, which is impossible, there is no more reason to conclude that it ceases *to be* when the body dissolves, than that motion is destroyed when a watch is run

down. Hayes is reading hard, and searching, but he is often puzzled, and I am a bad hand at argument, so I wish that you would tell me your opinion."

I give this as a specimen of the manner in which these poor fellows were engaged, and will only record one more anecdote, which diverted me from the ignorance it displayed. One of them, who was a Roman Catholic, and reported that he had been intended for the priesthood, said to the metaphysician, whose debate with Hayes I have just related, "Well, I was a long time glad enough to throw off the shackles of religion, which are as troublesome as handcuffs to a bad man, who wants to follow all the vagaries of his will; but the only difference *now* between Mr. Courtenay and me is, that he would have us all take up with the Protestant profession; but sure, since Noah stepped out of the ark no one could be found to deny that ours is the true ancient faith any way. All might be balderdash to an unbelieving man, but if he goes to the Bible at all; why should'nt he

go to the old first creed, and not to new fangled doctrines."

"Why, Mr. Courtenay maintains very truly," answered the opponent, "that the religion of the Bible, call it by what name you like, has no more to do with the articles of that worship in which you were brought up than with the idolatry of Juggernaut."

"He may *say* so," replied our theologian; "and he is a sensible young man, but I'd beat him on that score any how, and that too with his own weapons. I will shew him in his own Bible St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans; and let me see whether he can shew me St. Anybody's Epistle to the Protestants."

When I mentioned this circumstance to Gerald, he was much amused, and remarked that his great trouble was with the men who had learned to read.

"And how," said I, "did you begin with those who could not?"

"By a method which I wish were more generally in use, and which is the same that was

employed in the early ages—oral instruction. To read is good if a man reads to his benefit, pernicious if he only employs letters as a new means of pouring into his mind that which is evil. They are merely a conduit pipe—the stream which flows through may either be clear and refreshing, or muddy and pestiferous. Were I a rich man, and Lord of a wide domain, I would try to reclaim first, and plant afterwards. I would not begin with sowing the rocks, or sticking trees in the marshes. Amongst my pupils here, I found that the most docile and teachable were those who had fewest prejudices to overcome, and corruptions to eradicate; and this was the case of some who were not scholars. I have six of them now learning to read under my deputy Malone, and I trust that they will be secured against bad books, by already knowing how to prefer good."

"I envy you, Gerald," said I; "and would give worlds to be all that you are. You have done much for me; yet still the rebel is at work within, and I am not as malleable in your hands as these poor people."

"I am an humble instrument," answered Gerald, "and deserve little praise. You have taken larger draughts of the poison, which militates against your peace, than these men had opportunity or education to imbibe; and your renunciation of error will be slow in proportion, but the wish is more than half the battle, and I am sure of your ultimate success. It is easier, as I have said, to break the ground and seek for water, than purify a feculent stream. Look around, and say whether the Bible is not a magician. Behold what it has accomplished. Here are Ethiopians washed white, profane scoffers turned to sobriety and seriousness, the drunkard become temperate, the renegade a devout worshipper, and the rebel a loyal subject. Show me such fruits from any other tree, and I will pronounce it to be as good. I hold these transmutations to be argument enough in favour of a volume which can operate them; and whether you agree with me or not, let me here entreat, my dear Albert, by the tie which unites us, I hope, in bonds of ever during friendship, that you will never more exercise

your talents, while you live, in undermining the conviction of others. We should think little of the wisdom of that man, who, on entering a strange territory, and being shown a map of the coast, the safe guidance of which the inhabitants assured him had never failed, were to recommend them not to pilot their barks again by its direction. The natural reply to such a man would be: if your real object be our security, give us a better chart than this, but, till you do so, do not take away one by which we have hitherto steered a prosperous course, and never been deceived."

As I am writing a memoir of my early days, and not a book of evidences, I shall merely state that the good cause had its full triumph, and the unwearied pains of my best friend were crowned by the sincerest recantation of my former errors, and most genuine adoption of those principles which furnish the only staff of faltering steps, the only light to human uncertainty. A complete revolution took place in my character, and though conscience became more and more tender every day, I grew happy,

and exchanged the feverish vicissitudes of an ill regulated temper, for repose of mind. Poor Mr. Talbot used to tell me that there was no internal monitor within the human breast, and the proof which satisfied me that he was right, lay in the different standards of vice and virtue set up in different nations; which is about as valid an argument as if he had said that the faculty of vision varied because one man looks through a green glass, another through a yellow, and a third through a piece that is transparent, at the same object.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE wished-for moment again arrived which brought tidings from the living world, and I must chequer the sombre hue of the desert by a glimpse of Clonmore-house, lest the weary spirit exclaim at Time, and say,

"——— Slack thing!
Thy scythe is dull—whet it for shame!"

A rich packet from England contained in a letter from Geraldine, the following account of Maria in her new sphere:

"—— When first I opened my astonished eyes on this magnificent London, the confusion of objects, and the rapidity of their successions, made my head giddy; but I have recovered my senses, and can now sit down quietly to tell you

of our dear sister, who is the picture of happiness. It is quite amazing to see with what perfect composure she adapts herself to scenes so unlike those of her former life. I suppose it is, that a refined and cultivated mind must wear the same character in all places, and therefore polished manners are a universal language. Though I am a year older than Maria, I should make a foolish figure were we to change places; not because I feel awed by any superiority of mind that I can perceive amongst the great. They differ from each other like people of lower degree, and we have been introduced to a few, the unaffected simplicity of whose air and style makes one forget every *little* distinction in a higher pre-eminence; but the *many* of the fashionable world are just as uninteresting as the *many* in that humbler walk upon which they look down, with this additional *desagrément* that they assume a *right* to be as dull, empty, and impertinent as others are through ignorance.

"I am a looker-on, and never forget that I owe a peep at high life merely to sufferance, on another's account not for my own sake. This

is fair enough, for I have no legal claim to admission, and no desire to urge a forged title. To be with Maria and her amiable husband is happiness enough for me; and then I find amusement in the novelty of every thing around me. You desire me to tell you all my remarks. They would fill a volume, but may often be ill-founded, for I am a novice, and therefore I will only venture on such observations as I am *sure* are not made in a cynical spirit.

"But I must first tell you that Maria's *debut* has been very successful; you perhaps imagine that this is a thing of course, and that the word *Countess* prefixed to any name must secure a full participation in all the privileges of first-class society, but no such thing. I have learned that even the rank of duchess is not sufficient to command admission within the sacred pale; so that Maria is fortunate so far as such distinction is valuable. Her youth, beauty, and tact have won the royal favour; she has been stamped with the sterling mark of court approbation, and it is the *fashion* to applaud Lady Clonmore. If fashion were always thus discri-

minating, I should love as much as I hate it; but the tyranny exercised by this autocrat is so tremendous, that how its authority is submitted to, in an age of liberty, seems wonderful. It is enough that a committee of the *elect* should cry down any person or thing, to blot the record from existence in *haut ton*. This is often done in the rudest manner, I am told, without any attention to good taste or feeling; while very inferior qualifications are hailed with flattering reception if they happen to suit the tribunal from which there is no appeal.

"I cannot express the comfort I feel in being a *nobody*, and therefore having perfect freedom to like and dislike as my individual character truly dictates, without reference to a despotism under which I should prove, I believe, a rebellious subject. What *I* think is of no consequence, and therefore I venture to be charmed with the same music which delighted all ears a year ago, but is now exploded; with books which have long been doomed to upper shelves, and with people who never saw the West-end; I can dare also, because I am 'dear sweet nobody,'

to think some of the present fashions in dress abominable, and admire others quite gone by. At the opera I listen with rapture to singers of whom the fashionable world is tired, and am courageous in meeting the supercilious glance, which is sure to pass its sentence on my rusticity.

"Sometimes I am amused by finding that the same remark which excites ineffable contempt when drawn from me, is very differently received when it has issued from Maria's lips. Again, I am entertained, and I may add provoked, at the sturdiness with which facts are contradicted if they do not please at *head quarters*. A poor lady, unluckily for herself, mentioned the other day a scene which she had witnessed, observing, that she wondered why fashionable people who might prescribe better manners should act so and so. *She* who made the remark was not of that class, and therefore, though she knew the story to be true, and only suppressed the names of the actors through delicacy, she was put to silence by an old Marchioness, who, looking sternly at the speaker,

and then, without condescending to address her, turning to my sister, said 'You know, my dear Lady Clonmore, such a thing is wholly impossible. There is a second set, and a third set, but one never heard of any thing like *that* in the first, you know, in one's life.'

"Now it so chanced that the anecdote to which this polite contradiction was given, alluded to circumstances which took place in the house of a nobleman, and the persons concerned in it were both countesses; but the relater was not privileged to make any observation, because she was unknown in high life, and therefore if Maria had not redoubled her attention to her, she would have been quickly overwhelmed, and got rid of without ceremony.

"It seems to me that *what* is said is not considered, but *who* says it is the only point of interest, and it is very comical to remember having heard the same object abused by the voice which now trumpets its praise, simply because a favouring fiat had been pronounced in the interval from some high source. There are people here who do not take the trouble of ac-

counting for such inconsistencies; and do not even go through the form of explaining that they have changed their minds, but are not ashamed of expressing the very opposite of an opinion perhaps only uttered yesterday. When the alteration happens to be favourable, one might fancy good nature to be the prompter; but I cannot help remarking, that there are many who will attend with ready ear to individual slander, and dissect a victim with unsparing industry, who will not suffer you to draw a moral conclusion from the example. *Personality* interests and stimulates. *Abstract* censures are only designed to rectify and improve: they therefore want the seasoning which is indispensable to some tastes. I lately heard a story of a duchess, which evinced such meanness of spirit that I could not have believed it, if it had not come from undoubted authority. Now were I to publish the anecdote, and affix names and dates to the narrative, I should delight a multitude who would turn contemptuously from the general observation, that 'exalted rank and shabby conduct were unequally paired.'

"I should hesitate in imparting judgments which seem so uncharitable, if it were not in compliance with your earnest request that I should give you my impressions as they arise, and as I tell them all to Lord Clonmore, who is my *pilot*, he always tells me when I am wrong. He is deeply versed in the knowledge of mankind, and has as much kindness of heart as penetration; so as he interests himself in drawing out my opinions, whenever I have his sanction for their correctness, I do not fear to mislead by telling you how things strike me in this wonderful London.

"Having given you the shades, let me now direct your view to the lights of the picture; and a more delightful one than the interior of Clonmore House exhibits, cannot be imagined. In union with all that is beautiful, tasteful, and luxurious, I find every excellence which blooms in the happiest domestic life. Lord Clonmore respects Maria's understanding as much as he is fascinated by her grace; while her esteem and affection for him are daily augmented, as new occasions continually occur to call forth

the noble qualities which form his character. His two sons, Lord Elwood and Mr. Granville, have been here, and though they are not likely to equal their father, they are pleasing youths, and it is gratifying to see how much attached they appear already to their *step-mother.* A circle of society selected for the *virtues* as well as accomplishments which adorn the individuals who compose it, has been called from the crowd of visitors who left their cards; and whether I consider the rational and pleasing *within*, or the elegant and spacious *without*, of this princely residence, I could forget that pride, vanity, and folly, still inhabit the earth, were not a memorandum every now and then to catch my eye, and remind me that such things are.

"Just as I had finished my last sentence, a footman announced Mr. Delamer, who is member for a town in the neighbourhood of Elwood Park, and I will give you a sketch of a dialogue between him and Maria, to which I have been listening.

"Mr. Delamer is a young man, that is, I suppose, not more than two or three and thirty,

but he looks much older than he is, and has a discontented unhappy air, which makes me feel melancholy when I am in his company. On coming into the room he spoke of regrets at having been so long without calling, but excused himself on account of excessive fatigue in attending the house.

"'You ladies,' said he, 'are happy creatures in knowing nothing of these things;' and replacing Maria's pencil which she dropped on the table, he added, 'these are your labours; music and drawing make up the sum of female toil, and that woman is truly wise who never plagues herself with travelling beyond the temperate zone of accomplishments.'

"'Well!' answered Maria, 'I do not see any thing intemperate in varying the amusements of one's harp and sketch-book by a few other resources; I should tire of my pencil were I to draw all day, and though music is a charming *episode*, it would make a dull history of life.'

"'Oh!' replied Mr. Delamer, 'I did not mean that your Ladyship was to turn artist.

Fortunately you are not confined to these amusements. Society has claims which produce pleasure as well as employment.'

"'Yes, society is a great enjoyment,' said Maria; 'and good society is perhaps doubly valuable, because it is very scarce; accomplishments are brought to such perfection now, that they leave little time for any thing else.'

"'Well, there is Lady Villars, the most accomplished woman in the world, you know, and yet I do assure you she reads every thing. I have reason to rue her literary propensities, for this very day she was to have given me her advice about furnishing my new house. Nobody has such good taste as Lady Villars, but she was so engrossed by this new novel, that my affairs are postponed, and I am *congedié* for to-day.'

"'I have not the pleasure of knowing Lady Villars,' said Maria; 'but I have heard of her accomplishments, and seen her everywhere.'

"'She is charming, the gayest being in the world; of course you know when I spoke of her reading, I do not mean *a Blue.* With grave matters she wisely never puzzles her brain.'

" 'I am not sure,' answered Maria, 'that you and I quite agree about pleasant people; I should soon be weary of any one who is never grave.'

" '*Chacun à son gout*,' said Mr. Delamer, shrugging his shoulders, 'but the French division of a woman's life I think excellent. Till five and twenty a belle, you know—from that till fifty *bas bleu*, and then *dévote*, or what she pleases—*carte blanche* after half a century to be as religious, literary, and disagreeable as she likes. As your Ladyship is in *la première jeunesse*, I think that you must be *d'accord* with me.'

" 'Indeed I am not,' replied Maria; 'you will think me incorrigible, but I never can adopt your doctrines. If they are essential to female perfection, I shall not be one of the *elite*. But pray how does this harmonize with the delight which you expressed the other day at finding your little girl poring over the Annual Register in your library, and preferring this amusement to playing with her brother?'

" 'Dear Lady Clonmore, you have touched

me on the weak point. Cornelia is my folly, I own; but the little sprite is only six years old, and there is time enough to fit her for the world. She may divert herself and papa for a few years to come without danger, and you have no idea of that infant's sagacity. The fairy asks questions already which I cannot answer, and insists on having a reason for every thing.'

"'Dear child!' exclaimed Maria, 'and must Cornelia be told at fifteen that the faculties which even now are putting forth the buds of spring, cannot be permitted to blossom? Why cruelly encourage now, a gratification so soon to be laid aside?'

"'The truth I believe is, Lady Clonmore, that these little ones are reflectors in which we love to look on our own image in the clear speaking eye, and brilliant intellect. The talents of our offspring are identified with *self*, and we cannot help being vain of any thing distinguished proceeding from ourselves. This I believe is the true story; but the child grows into woman—woman attracts man—man is governed by exterior grace, and does not want to

have a wife studying theology, or dirtying her hands with chemistry, botany, and mineralogy.'

"'Suppose,' said Maria, 'that your daughter happened to like history, or to prefer Shakspeare and Milton to a novel, would you prohibit these?'

"'No, not *prohibit*, for I am *chicken-pecked* as I told you, and confess myself a dotard about my girl. But to answer *generally*, what benefit does a woman reap from knowing by heart a long list of defunct monarchs who have seldom left us any thing but their vices or their follies to remember? As to poetry, every one knows a smattering of Shakspeare, and I wish that a madrigal of his which Lady Villars sings divinely to her harp, may not be obsolete by the time that Cornelia comes out; but Milton—defend me from Milton. With all due submission to your Ladyship, I must call the Paradise Lost a farrago of sublime nonsense. I would as soon sit down to read 'Thomas à Kempis,' and would never allow a woman to look at such

stuff. A woman of fashion should be all *couleur de rose.*'

"Maria smiled. 'Like most disputants we are not likely, I see,' said she, 'either to convert the other. I cannot, however, avoid wondering to find a Whig—a man of the *free* school—a declaimer on liberty, so very arbitrary. If Tories exercised but half this tyranny, they would meet no quarter. But *you* to be a jailer of the human mind! How little should I have guessed that these were your *real* opinions after reading your speech of Monday night.'

"'Then your Ladyship reads the Parliamentary debates? *Such* authority is strong against me; but till now I must own to have held the heretical doctrine that the business of a wife is to be handsome, well dressed, full of gaiety, smiles, and good humour; and to find mine in the midst of a political argument on my return home, would have set me into a frenzy.'

"'Pray,' answered Maria, 'let my taste not interfere with yours, in which I hope both for

Mrs. Delamer's sake and your own, that she sympathizes; but I see that I have much to learn. I never knew that beauty, rich dress, and sweet temper formed a *sequence* in fashionable life. I am but a novice, yet my experience, short as it is, furnishes some contradiction to your statement, and leads me to doubt that the combination of which you speak is invariable. I think I have seen beauty often disgusting from pretension and affectation, fine dress coupled with extravagant vanity, and both leagued with malice and ill-humour. I have witnessed much gaiety which did not proceed from the heart, and beheld smiles which beamed on all but home; while on the other hand I can testify to some delightful instances of domestic happiness and peace, in scenes which are lighted by the brightest play of intellect, and the most active exercise of understanding.'

"The door opened at this moment, and in came Lady Barclay, who vapoured during a visit of ten minutes, and laughing in her unmeaning way, turned to Mr. Delamer, and said, 'I conclude that you and Lady Clonmore have

been settling the national debt, for I do assure you that you look like nothing but an undertaker this morning.'

"'What a consummate fool is that woman!' ejaculated our M. P. as the door closed on Lady Barclay.

"'How admirably educated for a *wife!*' said Maria, 'but I certainly should not like her for a *daughter.*'

"Mr. Delamer sighed as if he thought his own lot not very dissimilar from that of Sir Thomas Barclay; and on the arrival of more company took his leave."

So ended Geraldine's narration. From Maria herself I had the welcome testimony of her being as happy as the still chequered lot of human life admits. In the absence of original matter with which to diversify the tale of my banishment, I may be forgiven for drawing on second hand resources. My sister's letters only reported those occurrences which are familiar to people dwelling on the busy theatre of life. To me they were replete with novelty and enchant-

ment. A page from Maria's packet shall end my London news.

"You ask how I feel, transported to a stage so unlike that of my earlier days. Perhaps if I were more captivated than is the case with the *grande monde*, the fear of not pleasing in return might render me uneasy, and constrain the natural flow of my character in some awkward attempt at conforming to the habits and manners of those around me. Imitation is a dangerous experiment, and the science of those who judge of its correctness is so finished, that the smallest want of fidelity would be instantly detected in the copy. On the other hand, any striking divergency from the established rules of good breeding might have brought me into contempt, and, what would still have been more painful to my feelings, involved Lord Clonmore in the ridicule attached to a mistaken choice.

"Calm and self-possessed from being so happy under my own roof, that I required nothing beyond it, I determined from the first not to embark precipitately nor with any *éclat* on fashion's perilous tide. Nothing secures so much patron-

age as ability to do without it, and I lost nothing by taking the world quietly. People gave me more credit for acquaintance with its scenes than was justified by reality, from finding that I was not intoxicated by its allurements. In short I avoided committing myself; drew back from public gaze, averted criticism by denying it materials on which to be severe, and gained time to benefit by the practised knowledge of Lord Clonmore, and the friendly advice of a charming woman to whose guidance he consigned me, and who took me under her wing with that delicate tenderness which informed my ignorance without wounding my pride.

"With the puppets of high life my indifference makes me at ease, and in the group which I have been enabled, through the skilful discrimination of my counsellors, to select from the glittering multitude, I find merciful arbitrators, who pass gentle sentence on all my deficiencies. With these I breathe an atmosphere as pure as if the smoke of London never mingled in the air of Clonmore-house, and enjoy retirement when

I desire to do so, as completely as though I were seated by you in Prince of Wales's Fort.

"How little are the realities of life altered by the tinsel of state! The finest drapery cannot conceal deformity, and a blaze of jewels often conducts the wandering eye to rest on care-worn features. Is it not delightful to think how equally happiness is dispensed, and that while no lot is bereft of some ground for thankfulness, none is placed beyond the sense of dependence on Him who gives and takes away?

"You will laugh at the idea of my setting up for a *reformer*, but I would have you to know that I am bold enough to wage unrelenting war against the system of foppery and impertinence which is gaining upon us, and if not repelled, will become triumphant. What do you think of three young noblemen who joined to give a splendid ball a few nights ago, and determined that only *beauties* should grace their assembly? In this spirit, worthy of Constantinople, these youths selected one or two from every house, according to their caprices, not condescending to invite any one who would not be decidedly

ornamental to their rooms. The only way in which I can shew my sense of such a proceeding is by leaving out this presumptuous trio on my ball-night, which is fixed for the twentieth; and as some of the royal family are to honour me by their presence, my party cannot be deemed unworthy of Lords Clinton, Morley, and Barton. An old gentleman was expressing his displeasure to me yesterday at the infractions which he said are daily permitted on good manners, and finished his critique by saying that 'till forty he had lived looking up to age, but from that period the tide had turned, and he now found himself called upon to bend the knee to youth.

"But my London gossip is perhaps uninteresting to you, who hold converse with the sublime of nature, far removed from the sickly scenes of fashionable dissipation. Yet how I long to have you here! Could I see you added to our fireside again, and hear tidings of my beloved Harold once more, I should love this little planet, I am afraid, too dearly, notwithstanding its imperfections.

"Ere long we shall set out for Elwood Park, which will be more lovely from contrast. I was visiting a princess the other day, and remarked that her beautiful drawings, which ornamented the room in which she sat, were all representations of rural life. If a milk-maid could draw as she does, *her* scenes would probably be taken from a *regal* demesne. How strange it seems that habit should thus operate in a contrary direction, and suggest its opposites, so that he who has been pent up in a city, pines for the open fields and running stream, *not* that he would *enjoy* them; while those whose destiny has removed them 'far from the world's ignoble strife,' wonder how rational minds can be satisfied with inanimate creation.

"This is an interesting subject and would lead farther, but it is perhaps sufficient solution of the matter, to know that we *feel* the *evil* of our own condition whatever it may be, while we *imagine* the *good* of every other. Lord Clonmore sends you affectionate regards."

CHAPTER XIV.

I FELT that my sojournment, as Maria described, suggested opposites, and began to think that longer banishment was not good for me.

I pass over the ocean of time because sea and sky, however diversified the clouds may be by the rising and setting sun, and however the "green one" may vary in its smoothness or its hue, for him who paces the deck with anxious eye, these changes will not bear repetition here. Blow on, ye winds, till the vessel reefs in her sails; flow on, time, till the day of emancipation shall arrive.

At last it came, yet not unmixed with pain, so true it is that a *final* parting from any thing or any place can never occur to a mind of ordinary sensibility without exciting the most sorrowful emotions. In our case too, we were

bidding adieu to men who were endeared to us by long companionship in a desert, which had the effect of drawing close the bonds of kindness, and Gerald had the gratifying reflection to sharpen *his* regrets, though it soothed them also in the same moment, that he had been the hallowed instrument of lasting good to several fellow-creatures. A ferocious band of savage characters were converted into a fast knot of christian friends. A single act, or even a series of acts, beautiful, noble, and disinterested, may spring from moral motives, not that they often do so; but whoever, like me, has been familiar with unbelieving men, will acquiesce in the conclusion that there is no permanent operation of virtue on the human heart except through faith in God, and desire to please Him in whom we trust.

Bitter were the lamentations of those whom we left behind. The desolate dwelling which we were going to quit for ever, was interesting to Gerald from the benefit which he had imparted—to me from that which I had received; but we were returning to friends and country,

to the busy haunts of the civilized world, to the crowded high-ways of life, while our companions were destined to feel, in all its privation, the loss of those to whom they had long looked up as the pole-star of their way. They accompanied us to some distance from the fort, and I am not ashamed to record the fact that many a tear witnessed our separation. A limited seclusion from the world seems, by temporary suspension, to increase the faculties of love and enjoyment on our return to its cheering intercourse, while too long a lapse in communion with mankind, is apt to paralyze our feelings, by depriving the mind of every object on which to exercise its energies till it is past recovery. *Our* absence was just sufficient to send us back full of the most vivid anticipation, and the most ardent hope.

Our journey lay over rude uncultured regions, and was performed without any of those European luxuries of accommodation which smooth the progress of a British traveller. It came however to a happy termination, and all the difficulties of the road were quickly consigned

to oblivion when we found ourselves safely arrived at Quebec.

My uncle's reception of the exiles was truly cordial, and he proceeded immediately to perform the kind promise which he made at our departure. A few days sufficed to replenish our wardrobes, and never did two children when dressed in their first suit of clothes, look more complacently on themselves and all around, than we did on finding, after a complete *refit*, how like other people we appeared notwithstanding our long rustication. The change which my mind had undergone in retirement was probably well known to my uncle. Gerald had in all likelihood informed him of my progress in opinions very opposite to those which I had carried with me from his presence; but whatever was the fact, I made no inquiry, and my kind relative had good sense and tact sufficient to avoid displaying any knowledge that my character had suffered alteration. I frequently admired the judgment which led him to address himself to me with apparent expectation of sympathy upon several topics which

we had formerly disputed, as if he entirely forgot how much we had differed from each other. This was done with such ease and good humour, as to make me feel quite unrestrained; and thus, judiciously spared the humiliation of a formal disavowal, I soon expressed myself with freedom, and rejoiced my uncle by a sincere concurrence in his favourite tenets.

After a little time, when we had delivered up the accounts of our stewardship, and the preliminaries for our admission as partners into the firm, were adjusted, I ventured to hint my anxious desire to visit England, and see my sisters once moré.

" Not yet, my dear boy," was my uncle's reply: " Old Sam Johnson used to say, that ' It is easier to abstain than be temperate.' He is right. Once return to the pleasures of idleness, and adieu to business and Quebec. Work steadily a little longer, and you will go back sufficiently independent to give you a command of that consideration which would now be only coldly reflected on you from the more exalted station of your relatives. Remember that you

are now a poor merchant, and there is danger that your *Bourgeoisie* might do more to lower Lady Clonmore, than her new rank has power to raise you. You should not oblige her as yet to take you *in tow*. In a little time your sister's pretensions will be confirmed, and by that time you will not be an incumbrance to her. When you are able to purchase a handsome estate, your friends will not despise you; and when Mr. Fitzmaurice of —— in the county of —— is presented, it will not be asked, whether or not you have ever handled a bill of lading in your life?"

There was a great deal of sound discretion in what my uncle said, but it did not allay the fever of my longing to go to England. However, though not convinced by his reasoning, I had learned a wholesome distrust of my own, and therefore, endeavouring for the present to resist intrusive thoughts of

"Home, the sacred refuge of our life,"

I resolved to try and make compensation for preceding neglect, though the hopes held out to me were too large and indefinite to give much

animation to my industry. I plodded on at my daily toil; while my chief delight was in receiving letters from Clonmore House. Though I loved my sisters affectionately, it must be owned that Maria's fortune, which excited my vanity, added greatly to the charm of frequent intercourse with my sisters. I used to gaze with childish pleasure on the coronet seals, and pore over the chronicles of fashion in a London newspaper, dwelling with sweet pride on such words as the following:

"The Countess of Clonmore has issued cards for a ball on the 15th of next month;" or "The Countess of Clonmore entertained three hundred fashionables at Clonmore House on Thursday evening."

My uncle caught me one day spelling over something of this kind, and smiling as he passed, repeated playfully,

"A saint in linen, twice a saint in lawn."

"Eh, Albert! Is that true?"

I blushed, and remembered my democrat days.

Maria's felicity was now at its height from the birth of a daughter, who, like all *eldest borns*, was

decreed at a week old to be the *most* lovely, *most* intelligent creature that father, mother, aunt, or nurse, had ever beheld; and I was already informed how Miranda was to be educated, what masters she should have, what she was to excel in, and all the fond anticipation of maternal joy which bound over time and space, were wafted across the Atlantic. In one letter I was told that Lord Airy had protested against accomplishments, and said that the harp and piano-forte *must* very speedily be out of fashion, because, added he, "every city miss does every thing so well, so like a professor, that it will soon be bad taste to sing or play."

"Miranda shall do both," replied Maria, "but a great deal more beside, so that if accomplishments are discarded, *my* daughter shall not lose her *all*."

After my return to Quebec, I met my old shipmate Clarke, and marvelled when he resumed with unabated zeal those absurdities which but three years before I thought the essence of human sagacity. I could hardly believe how much my own opinions had changed,

till I heard the nonsense of my former notions fresh from his lips.

"All religions must be false, because all cannot be true. I have therefore given religion to the winds," said Clarke, exultingly to me one day.

"Would you not try your title to an estate," answered I, "though there were fifty candidates who claimed as well as you, and might you not be led to think somewhat *more* highly than you did before of a property which you perceived so many were desirous to prove their own, by the laws of the land? You would not give the *estate* to the winds, would you?"

"No, truly," answered Clarke, "C'est une autre chose."

Clarke had fallen upon habits which were well suited to his creed, and as nothing that Gerald or I could urge produced any effect in reforming his conduct, we sounded a retreat, and cut his acquaintance. A part of every day was passed in seeking some news of Harold, and I inquired, without success, on board every ship that came into the harbour.

Matters were proceeding in their usual train, when my uncle came one morning to the office and proclaimed the glad tidings that he wished me to set out directly for France, and arrange some important affairs with his friend the American ambassador, then resident at Paris. My last accounts from England had stated that the Clonmores and Geraldines were meditating a flight to the French capital, now rendered practicable by the peace of Amiens. The alacrity with which I undertook this mission may be imagined, and though it was grievous to part with Gerald, all sombre reflections were buried in the full tide of joy with which I regarded a meeting which should re-unite me to my family, from whom it seemed an age since I was separated.

I embarked, and was charmed by the beauty of the St. Lawrance, though the image of my mother rose painfully on memory as I retraced the way towards that island which she no longer inhabited. Hope has eternal spring for those who still expect more than they have ever received; but the pleasures of memory can only

exist for such as are able to look back without self condemnation. I tried to turn from thoughts of the past, but they pressed closer for every effort to banish them. Some balm, however, flowed from the consciousness of being less unworthy than when I had traversed this magnificent river.

The ship in which I engaged my passage, attracted by her name, was called the Innisfail. This sound was grateful to my ears, and her captain, of whom I had received a good character, was a fine athletic young man, bearing a kind and humane disposition under the rough garb of a seaman. He spoke French like a native of France, though not exactly of Paris, and at first I took him for a Canadian, but he was a native of Ireland.

When a man is thrown upon his own resources in a long voyage, woe to him who is not able to beguile the heavy hours with a book. I had brought sea-store for the mind as well as the body, but during the three or four first days I passed my time chiefly in gazing around me, and walking up and down the deck. At length,

tired of rumination, I took a volume from my trunk, and had just opened it when Captain Benson approached me, saying, "Sir, I beg your pardon for intruding, but if you are a reader, you may find something to amuse you in a box of books which I have got on board. I neither know whose, nor what they are; they were left with me by my poor brother, who was master of this vessel before I took the command of her. He lost his life through decline, brought on him by cold when he was every thing but lost in the Innisfail. There was a young gentleman on board at the time, to whom these books belonged, and my brother put him and an old Irish woman who attended him, for he was very ill and not right in his mind, into a small boat in hopes of their making the coast of France; but he never heard more of them till the day of his death, and often lamented that they did not stick to the ship which, though reduced to a hulk, made her way safely into port after all."

This story struck me. It was sad, and brought vague fancies across my mind. I hastened to

follow the captain, who took me down stairs, and opened a large square deal box on which a card of address had once been nailed. It was torn off, except a fragment from which the ink had been washed out, and there only remained a blank shred, and the tacks which had fastened the direction. The captain returned to his duty, and left me to examine the box, which, after removing some coarse brown paper, I began to empty, taking out all the contents before I opened any of the volumes with which it was filled. The books were old, and weather-beaten in their outward garb, and I had nearly reached the bottom of their receptacle, when a small packet carefully folded caught my eye.

What words can give utterance to the emotion with which I beheld, on opening the envelope, the pocket-book, seal, and ring which I had rescued from the deep, and disengaged from the breast of Albinia Talbot? My blood ran cold. I nearly fainted; and for a long time was unable to continue my search. Within the case, when I had the power to look at it again, I discovered some lines in my mother's hand-

writing, which had evidently been addressed to Harold, whose restless anxiety to leave his home appeared to have suggested them. They were inscribed by

A MOTHER TO HER SON.

Alas! ocean may bear thee to-morrow,
And its sunshine may see thee depart,
But has absence a charm for that sorrow,
That lies hid in the deep of thy heart?

It is not in the hoarse sounding billows,
It is not on the wings of the wind,
It is not in the song of the willows,
That my Harold contentment shall find.

Every clime has its care, and its canker;
Every language its accents of grief;
After new scenes the sad soul may hanker,
And yet still seek in vain for relief.

See how gaily yon proud sail is swelling,
As she glides by thy bark on the tide;
But has she no affliction in dwelling?
Look at him who hangs over her side.

'Tis in sadness he muses, believe me,
While he flies to the shore thou hast left,
Though its sun shines, his land will deceive thee,
And will he feel in thine, less bereft?

Hast thou marked the steep path of ambition,
As its bright tract led up to the sky;
And still envied the victim's condition,
When he reached the ascent but to die?

Hast thou pondered the lot of the miser,
He who starves while his casket o'erflows;
Or imagined the poet much wiser,
Whose young visions are fresh as the rose?

Wilt thou marvel at yon insect flying,
Which was creeping in dust yesterday;
When at eve thou beholdest it dying,
And brushest the atom away?

Just as much are the angels admiring,
All the paltry distinctions of earth,
After which busy mortals aspiring,
Strain to grasp from the hour of their birth.

One distinguishing badge worth attaining.
The pure myriads acknowledge above;
Salem's star, by whose beam some are gaining
The bright mansions of rest, truth, and love.

From the wild fires of fancy returning,
Let that star its mild radiance impart;
Oh, my dreamer! thy bosom is burning;
Turn thee back to the home of this heart.

A lock of hair labelled, "My Mother's," was

all beside, which was contained in this interesting packet. When sufficiently recovered from the agitation into which I had been thrown, by a discovery thus unexpected, I examined every volume, in the vain hope of finding some clue to my brother's fate. What would I not have given to be assured that he had escaped the perils of the deep!

I found several works which had belonged to my father's well remembered collection; and wrapped up by themselves the bible and prayer-book of my mother. Inscrutable are thy ways, oh Providence! These affectionate parents would have given the mines of Golconda, to have seen such testimony of being cherished in Harold's breast; but it was denied. When I had finished unpacking the box, I called the Captain, and told him of the discovery which I had made, requesting him to give me any farther information in his power respecting the young gentleman to whom he had alluded, and who could be no other than a brother, for whom I had long been in search.

Captain Benson could add but little to the evidence before me. He could only tell that the leak which threatened destruction to the ship, her cargo, and passengers, had sprung when they were off the French Coast; and as they had previously suffered a severe gale of wind, she was not considered sea-worthy, when my brother and his attendant were put into a boat, as I had already heard, and a dead calm having succeeded the storm, hopes had been entertained that they had gained some neighbouring port. Captain Benson concluded his brief narrative, with a request that I should accept the box and its contents. "You are," said he, "the natural heir of your brother's property, should he unfortunately be no more; and if still alive, you may one day restore it to him."

I thankfully accepted an offer so kindly intended, and retired to my cabin, reflecting on this remarkable coincidence. Fortune had dealt with me most capriciously. While I spent hours of every day in endeavouring to trace my poor

Harold, I was unable to procure the least particle of intelligence; and here, at a moment when I had not the slightest expectation, I suddenly stumbled upon all that perhaps was ever to be learned relating to his luckless destiny.

CHAPTER XV.

The voyage was prosperous, and I landed in safety; secured my precious reliques, and made my way as quick as I could to Paris. My sister and Lord Clonmore had not yet arrived, but the credentials which I brought from Quebec immediately introduced me to the American Ambassador, who was a very enlightened, agreeable man; and through his kindness I obtained an entré at once to the best society in the capital, besides feeling domesticated directly in his hotel.

Ere a little month elapsed I had dined at the Tuilleries, with that individual whose life was a meteor, whose death a dream. Though no longer a victim of delusion, I retained my enthusiasm, and as the door opened which ushered me for the first time into the presence of Napo-

leon, my feelings may be more easily imagined than described. If the volumes which have been written upon him were multiplied ten-fold, I cannot quit the subject without indulging for a moment in the recollections attached to that celebrated name: so extraordinary a physiognomy I never beheld. One half of his penetrating countenance appeared as if laughing at the other, and I never saw him, that he did not convey to my mind a belief that he was more surprised himself at that paralysis, which by almost simultaneously benumbing the energies of Europe, placed him on the pinnacle of his splendid elevation, than any of the spectators; and I have no doubt that though within certain limits, he was aware of his power to turn the tide of affairs as he pleased, he was as much astonished with the *extent* of that influence which he exercised, during a season, over the minds of men, as an expert juggler would be, who, designing to play off the most ingenious sleight of hand to full effect, found that he had unawares performed a real miracle.

Had genius *alone*, unaided by the most ex-

traordinary concurrence of circumstances, accomplished the prodigies which he achieved, he would have preserved his pre-eminence; but I am not going to enter upon a political disquisition, and shall only add of Napoleon, that in a private capacity he acquitted himself with guarded politeness, and said something flattering to every one in the drawing-room, though it was evident that he wanted *ease.*

In the midst of his regal *festum*, he never failed to remind me of Macbeth in the banquet scene, and could I have peeped into the interior of his breast, the similarity might probably have received confirmation.

Without impugning the talents of this wonderful little man, it may fairly be asserted, that nothing short of divine prescience which sees to the end of all things, could feel *secure* in his situation. He had it is true found mankind reduced to puppets under his hand, but that very circumstance must have instilled caution into his mind, lest the same machinery should be one day successfully directed against himself, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that many of

the rapid conquests, and daring enterprizes, which have been attributed to the deep-laid schemes of ambitious calculation, were in reality but devices to give employment, and hope of plunder to an armed multitude whom he feared to see pause, or permit to have leisure for asking themselves why his usurpation was allowed.

I saw the frank and amiable, but repudiated Josephine, at the Tuilleries. She was not a striking person, but good humour, and absence of care, produced in her that fitness for society which was deficient in her consort; and she played her part, on receiving and dismissing her *guests*, with equal kindness and grace.

In this palace of the ancient kings I also beheld the stately train of upstart royalty, raised like an exhalation from its native obscurity. Here I sat next to T——d, that compound of sensuality and dissimulation, with face, (as a lady who sat on my right hand, to whose graphic similes I was indebted for much amusement, remarked,) "pâle, flat, and round as a cream-cheese." He gazed with bloated eyes, and devoured every dish with them, ere his

mouth was employed, which, when put into requisition, *gobbled* like a duck, with an activity which knew no diminution till the end of a repast, which occupied two hours. When we rose from table, this man, who looked such a mountain of animality as might have served for the hieroglyphical representation of "fat of the land," offered his arm to a fair one, and waddled from the *salon à manger*, while his hateful countenance exhibited an arena in which malice and hypocrisy strove for pre-eminence.

Here also I saw the long list of generals in their gorgeous costume, concealing all the several gradations of original insignificance under the splendid scales of gold and silver with which they were overlaid from head to feet.

The imposing pomp of numbers and external decoration, made me feel as if viewing the magnificent pageant of a Persian monarch surrounded by his satraps; and I could not help musing continually on the vicissitudes of human life, as I gazed at the magic-lanthorn which Paris presented to my observation.

I was introduced to the Abbé Sieyes, that

singularly gifted being, who seemed to look on the whole world as one universal chess-board, and to play the nations on its surface like so many bits of ivory or wood. The lady whom I met at my *debut* dinner in the Tuilleries perceiving me to be a novice and full of curiosity, took me in the kindest manner under her tutelage. She told me the names of all the motley group before me, and invited me to visit her, which I did on the following day. To her extensive acquaintance and good nature I became indebted for a sight of all that was best worthy of notice in the French capital.

Lady Catherine Turton was a single woman, of about five and forty, and while I speak of her, I gladly take occasion to proclaim, with grateful memory of her goodness, a panegyric on *old maidism.* There is no better chaperone for a young man, who, like me, had every thing to learn, than an unmarried woman of a certain age, provided that her knowledge of the world, and consideration in society, give efficiency to her services. *Mothers,* however polite and inclined to befriend, are encumbered by responsi-

bilities relating to their daughters, from which the veteran maiden is happily exempt. Lady Catherine, who was herself an universal favourite, introduced me every where, and as her thirst of inquiry often took her amongst people out of her own rank, I came in for a sight of many extraordinary personages, while attending on her various peregrinations.

Of this number was the philosophical staymaker, whose writings have contributed to loosen many more minds than his whalebone ever compressed bodies. We found Tom Paine, living at the top of at least half a dozen flights of stairs —ugly as sin, and a perfect Bardolph from the use of spirituous potations. As he was a zealous votary of the Nine, perhaps he may have recollected that

> "——— The Muses still require
> Humid regalement, nor will aught avail
> Imploring Phœbus with unmoistened lips."

However this was, he certainly did not omit due homage at the shrine of Bacchus, and, much prouder of his verses than his metaphysics, he employed his pen in a thousand poetical flights,

addressed to the ladies of his acquaintance. Paine was a man of inordinate personal vanity, and honestly believed that few of the fair sex could withstand his attractions. Strange as this fancy may appear in one whose appearance was an antidote to love, it was not the less true; and a very pretty girl, to whom I was subsequently presented, actually shewed me a number of *billets doux* which he had written to her, under the impression that a wish which she had expressed to look at the model of a bridge which Paine had constructed with great mechanical ingenuity, and was shewing to his visitors, proceeded from an irresistible desire to make his acquaintance. These notes, partly prose and partly poetical, were penned in a light, airy, and rather elegant manner, with all that playful *volagerie* which a young Frenchman could have employed. The lady was so much diverted by this paper flirtation, that she encouraged the correspondence, and delayed her visit to the workshop of the philosopher, in order to possess herself of his epistolary compositions for the amusement of her friends.

On another day I dined in company with some *esprits forts*, amongst whom were several authors. I was invited expressly to meet Volney, and longed to satisfy my curiosity by conversing with him.

Few things are more striking to a youthful mind in the habit of drawing largely on imagination, than the difference between the ideas formed of men through an enthusiastic admiration of their works, and the men themselves when we come in contact with them. Volney had once been my standard of perfection—almost the god of my idolatry; and though my opinion was changed respecting the value of his writings, a certain interest in an author who had formerly filled my mind, continued through habit, and I expected his coming with breathless impatience.

The door opened—Monsieur Volney arrived; and five minutes dispelled the illusion of years. He talked fluently, but flippantly, and with a degree of dogmatism, as natural to the *free* school of religion as of politics, and which, as far as my experience extends, is inseparable from

a *rebel* in either. The dinner at which I met him was given by one of the Institute, who assembled a number of reputedly clever men to meet this arch infidel of his time; and the dessert was scarcely put upon the table, when the conversation took such a turn as to give him an opportunity of which he never failed to avail himself, in sharpening the edges of satire and ridicule.

As I was the youngest in company, and two ecclesiastics were present, I deemed it my part to be a listener; but when I found that the cause of religion was likely to be lost by *default*, and that Mr. Volney looked round triumphantly after pronouncing the following words: "No, Sir; I defy you to shew any reason why we should believe the prediction delivered by Moses respecting the Jews, to possess any claim to inspiration, if you do not also admit that Seneca was equally inspired when he prophecied the discovery of America," I could no longer preserve silence; and finding no advocate ready to step forward, I boldly entered the lists, and met the adversary in open fight. As I only adduced the

arguments of another which seemed to me invincible, I shall not incur the charge of arrogance in laying claim to what I certainly obtained—a complete victory.

In the commencement I felt, that like David when about to encounter Goliah, I was smiled on with sovereign contempt, or pitied for the overthrow which I was sure to experience; but the tables were turned, and in the end, I was applauded with "bravo, bravissimo," and assured that I had acquitted myself *à merveille.*

On the following day I found that my name was trumpeted all over Paris, and to set Monsieur Volney and me against each other was anticipated as a spectacle, but I had no desire to embark in another trial of skill. My defence had evidently been advantageous to the cause for which I pleaded; but I had not such confidence either in the power of my intellect or extent of my knowledge, as to admit of boasting; and in the fear of counteracting a favourable impression, I determined on declining several invitations which followed my "*grand succès*" in this theatrical Paris.

Lady Catherine was going on a little excursion, and offered me a seat in her carriage, which I accepted, to visit Meudon, Fontainebleau, the valley of Montmorenci, and other places interesting from those events of which they had been the scene. But though deep and various were the feelings excited in my breast by these monuments of past time, I shall not wander into description of what is so well known. One sign post of an obscure inn at which we stopped to refresh our horses, shall be an exception: it was so characteristic of the spirit which animated France at that period. The device represented in this rude painting was the sun marking its progress on a dial, and the motto underneath was

"Ma revolution est invincible,
Telle est la votre, François."

After a pleasant tour with my excellent friend, I returned to Paris. My triumph had passed like a summer cloud, and was forgotten. Every one learns experimentally that there is a spunge which passes with obliterating sweep over each day's wonder, leaving the canvas blank and un-

occupied for the succeeding impression. A month was passed in a delirium of new faces, new scenes, new thoughts, till novelty was annihilated. Objects must not follow each other too rapidly before our eyes, or the whirl becomes monotonous through excess of variety, and we are prevented from dwelling long enough on the parts to distinguish them from each other.

CHAPTER XVI.

One evening, while attending a party from our ambassador's at the theatre, I was summoned to l'Hotel de l'Europe, where the long-wished for Clonmores and Geraldine had just arrived. A short time elapsed before my sisters were in my arms, and it would be impossible to pourtray the mingled emotions of my soul on meeting them once more. Maria was splendidly beautiful. She and Geraldine were very dissimilar, but each appeared a lovely specimen of her class. The former tall, graceful, and dignified, was fair as a lily, and soft as the eye of a dove. So naturally elegant was her mien, and so quiet every movement, that Maria seemed born for the rank which she had attained, though she still looked the very being from whom I had parted on the wild cliffs of Glendruid.

Geraldine was dark and animated. Delicate as the antelope, her form was perfectly symmetrical, and every limb was worthy of the sculptor's chisel. Her step was that of Ariel, and her hair the shining sable of a raven's wing. How proudly did I gaze upon them, improved by all the refinement of fashionable air and manner! In the feelings first awakened by their appearance, I could perceive within my heart a longing desire to shew them to all Paris. Lord Clonmore had retired with instinctive good breeding as I entered the apartment, and did not return till the effervescence of affection had subsided into tranquil enjoyment. He then presented himself, and accosted me with so much frankness and cordiality, that I felt in a moment as if we had been old acquaintances, and that I had only forgotten his features.

After two hours of delicious greeting, I went back to my hotel to dress for dinner. My head reeled; my spirits were intoxicated. Here I was in Paris, magnificent Paris, already known, and well received. Now going to enter upon a wider stage, not resting on my own uncertain

consideration but attached to the suite of an English earl, and claiming regard as brother to two of the most brilliant *belles* who had graced the Tuilleries. Reader, if thou rememberest the buoyancy of early years, I shall be forgiven for confessing to have been somewhat out of my senses at the time of which I speak.

On returning to the Hotel de l'Europe I found that Lord Clonmore, from the same delicacy to which I had been indebted in the morning, had invited a stranger or two, who kept up a lively and agreeable conversation during dinner, and served as a curtain in fortification, under cover of which I effected my retreat to the drawing-room with my sisters. What a rapturous evening for me! What a world of memory glided before our eyes while fancy's light and silvery tissues floated on the future scene! What thousand inquiries were interchanged!

My companions were delightful, but the question is, how did Albert look in such society? How did a youth, born and educated in the western wilds of Erin, and lately returned from the *ultima Thule* of Hudson's Bay, comport him-

self in the most sparkling metropolis of Europe? It is not for me to repeat the words of partial affection by which I was encouraged. Suffice it to say that Maria was not ashamed to lean upon the arm of her brother, though surrounded by all that was most imposing in the most splendid court of the age.

While the hereditary thrones were cobwebed over by a slothful prescription, the reign of Buonaparte was marked by glitter worthy of the "Arabian Nights Entertainment." Desirous to preserve the exaltation which he had attained, he flattered the vanity of the people over whom he ruled, and spared no cost to dazzle the imagination of his subjects. No mind of real genius can long delight in the unmeaning gaiety of the festive throng, and Napoleon, at the trembling height of ambition, had left behind him in the humbler walks of life all that careless contentment which must always inhabit every breast that would taste of mirth. He had a pensive thoughtful air in the gayest scenes.

I resolved from the first moment of Maria's arrival, not to embitter the pleasure which she

and Geraldine promised themselves by mentioning my adventure on board the Innisfail, and to their anxious questions, very truly replied, that I had hitherto been unsuccessful in learning any thing of Harold's fate. The subject appeared thenceforward to be dropped by tacit consent, as one only capable of rendering us all unhappy; and my sisters embarked on the full tide of Parisian fascination, not with the giddy intemperance of ill-regulated minds, greedy of amusement, and little fastidious in its selection, but they entered into

———" Ball-rooms and bowers with that delicate art,
Which extracts the pure moral that sinks to the heart,"

and contrived to draw such conclusions from all they saw, however captivating to the imagination, as sent them home with gratitude to heaven, which had not cast their destiny in France.

Wherever Maria appeared, she was *prima donna*, though totally unconscious herself of being especially distinguished, and ever ready to yield the pre-eminence which all seemed inclined to grant to the united influence of youth, beauty, and unaffected good nature. To this

constellation of natural attributes, Maria owed the distinction with which she was treated, much more than to any favour shewn ostensibly to her rank. Titles are common every where, and in fact, at the period of which I speak, there was an affectation current in France of despising them, though, in secret, there are no such adorers of wealth, power, and exaltation in all their bearings, as the whole democrat tribe have ever proved, and ever will prove, as long as the world lasts.

Paris exhibited at this time a shining confluence of whatever was most brilliant in genius and talent from every nation in Europe. Every body who possessed the power of locomotion appeared desirous of seeing with his own eyes the wondrous Corsican and his wondrous works; while the tasteful traveller and the moralist found "food for meditation even unto madness" in viewing the monuments of ancient grandeur, now turned from their original purposes, and impressively exhorting the most careless passenger to reflect on the instability of human greatness. Wherever the eye was directed, it was

met by the words "Liberté," "Egalité," &c. and in every ornamental decoration the initial letters N. and B. might be traced. Bonaparte, though not yet invested with the imperial purple, exercised the most despotic sway, but the people were satisfied with words, which were thrown as a tub to the whale, or a sop to Cerberus, and never stopped to inquire whether or not the sounds were representative of realities.

Lord Clonmore one day epitomized the whole history of his reflections on the strange medley before us, where the high and the low had changed places, and all looked like merry-andrews, by an emphatic description, conveyed in the following words: "My dear Albert, I feel exactly as if I were playing at four corners and a fool, with a set of charlatans in the tower of Babel." Nothing could be a more precise picture than this brief sentence exhibited. Every language of the earth mingled in the air, and no body seemed to occupy the place which original destiny had awarded him.

Maria, whose whole soul centered in her fireside, looked around for domestic virtue, and

wondered how wives and mothers contrived to be always in public. One day, however, I overheard her saying to our American ambassador, "Well, I have at last found a charming family group in the heart of this dissipated Paris, and am to pass this evening at their hotel, where I shall feel like a pilgrim in the desert, who sits down under the shade of a date tree by a rivulet of clear water, with lips parched, and feet scorched, from the burning suns and thirsty sands which he has encountered."

Lord Clonmore pressed her hand affectionately. The ambassador smiled, and said, "I shall have the pleasure of meeting your ladyship at Madame P's, and we will talk of her to-morrow."

He called on the following day, and Maria, eager to speak of her favourite, exclaimed, "What a delightful creature she is! So young, so lovely, so unspoiled by fashion. Do you know that she took me to her nursery to look at a young cherub lying in its cradle, while she leaned on her husband's arm, who paid her devoted attention during the entire evening."

"And do you know," replied the ambassador, "that the gentlemen of the long robe are at this moment making out a bill of divorce, which will separate to their mutual contentment that happy pair, and consign the 'cherub' and his nurse to the guardianship of some intendant on Monsieur P.'s estate near Lyons."

Maria was struck to the heart, but not feeling desirous that strangers should observe her emotion, brushed away a tear which was ready to fall.

"How extraordinary are these French," exclaimed Geraldine. "Admiring the exterior of virtue enough to practise it so captivatingly, while their hearts are not engaged in the scene."

"You must not judge of 'the French,' Miss Fitzmaurice, by the specimen which you see here," said the ambassador. "Notwithstanding all the atrocities of the Revolution, and the contempt into which religion and morals have fallen, there are numbers who hate the vice which they could not prevent, and love the virtue of which they are examples; but Paris is a masquerade at present. However, at all times

the French can dress a sentiment like a ragout out of any thing; so that you are not to infer the excellence of the material from the high seasoning of the dish."

It would be little interesting to recount the names of princes, ministers, nobles, authors, generals, whose forms flit before my memory, and are now numbered with the dead, while those who still occupy a niche in the temple of living fame, may not desire to be brought upon the stage. Of some it may be asked:

"How loved, how honoured, what avails them now;"

while of others the best charity is to refrain from drawing "their failings from their dread abode."

Time was speeding on golden pinions, and my sisters employed all the eloquence of affection, that power most irresistible, to persuade me that uncle Anthony could do without me, and that I might accompany them into Italy; but such agreeable day-dreams vanished with the arrival of a letter from Gerald, which brought intelligence of my uncle's death. That inestimable man was suddenly carried off by a com-

plaint of which he knew the fatal consequence, and though he never spoke of it, and was always cheerful, he was constantly prepared, as appeared afterwards, for a speedy dissolution. Deep and genuine was the grief which I felt at these tidings; which put a stop to all our gay projects, and turned my thoughts into a very different current, but the loss which I had sustained in that invaluable friend to whom I owed every thing, absorbed all minor considerations, and I mourned him in my heart.

Gerald's letter strongly recommended me to pursue my original instructions, and pass immediately into Jersey, there to wind up the business, of which particulars had been furnished me on leaving Quebec. He added that he would conduct the affairs of the house during my absence, and that my uncle's will should not be opened till my return.

My future fate was now involved in sorrow and uncertainty. I was going to leave a world of enchantment, without being able to guess what was to become of me. I might be thrown anew into poverty, and forced to work for daily

bread; excluded in the prime of life from all that rendered life attractive, and condemned to endure the restraint of a master very unlike my last.

These thoughts were not calculated to exhilirate my spirits, and all the affectionate soothing of my sisters failed of inspiring better hopes.

My course was pointed out, however, and time was not to be wasted in useless repining. Pleasure stood still, and I began to prepare, in bitterness of heart, for my departure.

On the same day which I fixed for quitting Paris, the Clonmores began their journey into Italy. By this arrangement we were spared the dreadful pang, of which those are ignorant who have never been left behind by dear friends, to taste the misery of separation through the thousand streams of memory, and see the chasm that surrounds them through the magnifiers of association. I took leave of the spirited, the agreeable lady Catharine, with unfeigned regret. Kindness is always charming to a young and grateful heart, but kindness in a foreign land is doubly valuable; and the attention of a woman

of fashion, towards a man whose age and circumstances forbid the idea of any sinister design, is never to be forgotten.

There is an ease, a tenderness, in such intercourse, that brings the maternal relation to one's mind, and mine was so peculiarly alive to this tie, that I loved Lady Catharine for suggesting its shadowy image. To her rank I had been indebted for an introduction to the "every body" of *haut ton* in Paris. To her friendly instruction I owed my safe conduct after obtaining the passport, and in whatever society I was placed through her influence, Lady Catharine's wit, humour, and vivacity, formed the *sauce piquante* which gave zest to the materials of which it was composed. Alas! I was never to behold her again. That very Paris which during its most shining pageantry allowed that she was a brilliant added to the magic zone, became her grave, and intelligence of her death drew from my heart a tribute as sincere as her varied powers of mind had ever derived from my taste and imagination. She is gone, and though her eye will never rest upon these pages,

I have pleasure in recording the impression that she has left indelibly engraven on a tablet from which her image will never be erased.

I bade a sad farewell to my sisters, and turning my back upon the first vivid enjoyments of my youth, sighed a fond adieu to the scene that enshrined them.

CHAPTER XVII.

PERHAPS there are few sensations more painful than the sense of nothingness that pervades the soul upon quitting a theatre upon which we played our parts, and felt, or flattered ourselves, that we had contributed individually to the general stock of happiness. This feeling accompanied my dreary progress, and I could not help comparing myself to one of those wretched players, who, quitting the stage, after marching over it in kingly robes, with regal crown upon his head, is stripped of his gorgeous attire, and sneaks through a vile postern door to gain his humble dwelling; where, when arrived, he has to plod with sleepless brain over the next night's part, in a thumbed and tattered book, till wearied nature seeks repose, and the poppies of oblivion are shed alike upon the monarch's state

and the beggar's degradation. True, I had sisters who moved in fortune's shining path, but could I endure, while youth and health were granted, to owe to the bounty of Lord Clonmore that competency which my own exertions ought to procure? Impossible!

I reached Jersey, and immediately set off for St. Helier. As soon as I arrived, and sent notice of my arrival to a gentleman with whom my business was to be transacted, I received a polite letter, requesting me to remove from the inn to his house, and preparing me for being visited by him and some of his friends. I declined the invitation, and pleading a slight indisposition, begged to postpone till the following day the favour intended for me.

The weather was delightful, and anxious to relieve the depression of my spirits by breathing the fresh air, I hastily took a little refreshment, and without knowing whither I was directing my steps, left the pretty town of St. Helier, and wandered some miles before I was aware of the distance which separated me from my inn. My mind was so full of the scenes I had quitted, and uncer-

tainty respecting the future, that hours glided imperceptibly away in meditation upon topics so fruitful of interest, when roused by fatigue of body to a recollection of the long walk I had taken, and desirous of a little rest, I quickened my pace towards a lovely dell which lay on my right hand, and leaving the road, I plunged into the thickest part of the wood which covered its precipitous sides, in quest of cool shade, a stream of water, and repose.

All these I found in the windings of a narrow, solitary, and beautiful valley. Having satisfied my thirst, I lay down upon a mossy bank, under the thick foliage of a willow. The birds which inhabited this glen appeared to be its only inmates, and so still was the scene around, that I could have fancied myself, if my eyes were shut, in one of my haunts at Hudson's Bay. I had lain resting my weary limbs in a state bordering on slumber during nearly an hour, when a shrill bark close at my ear awoke me. Starting up, I saw a beautiful Italian greyhound, white as snow, with a collar of wild berries round its neck, in an attitude half hostile, half playful,

ready with a spring either to pounce upon a foe, or bound forward towards a friend. I gazed around, supposing that I should see some person approach; but no one appearing, I made a movement of my fingers to encourage the dog, and such was its likeness to an animal of the same species which had been given, when a puppy, by one of the Talbots to my poor Harold, that I instinctively called "Philippa."

No sooner had I spoken than the dog rushed to me, sprang up with its fore paws on my shoulders, and pranced about me almost frantic with joy. In a moment all was riot and uproar, echo was disturbed, and the peaceful thicket was transformed into a kennel or bedlam of the canine race. I endeavoured to tranquillize the outrageous demonstrations of this little stranger beast, who, either from the general philanthropy of her nature, or mistaking me for some man whom she knew, was making the welkin resound with her joyful acclamations, but all in vain; the most obstreperous welcome still produced such a din, that I was quite overpowered, and was trying to make the best of my way back in

the same direction which had led me to the spot that I had chosen for my couch, when a rustling amongst the leaves causing me to turn my eyes suddenly round, they met those of a young man of genteel air and interesting countenance, whose features seemed familiar to me, though I could not recollect when or where I had ever seen him. He was shabbily dressed, had a foreign appearance, and seemed in a hurry to remove himself from my view. A little basket and a fishing rod denoted that he had been occupied in angling, and whistling to the dog, which was still caressing me in the most tumultuous manner, he apologized in French for her want of discrimination in thus accosting a stranger; then throwing a handkerchief lightly round her neck, called "Philippa" to follow him.

Amazed at the coincidence of this dog's name with that of one which she so much resembled, I started as her master pronounced it. Poor Philippa was not to be disengaged from me so easily. Slipping the noose she assailed me afresh, and seemed by the renewed energy of her affec-

tion, to express a fear of being separated from her new friend. The young man whose property she seemed to be, was evidently uneasy, and forgetting, in his anxiety to detach the dog, that he had spoken French when he first addressed me, he exclaimed in English, "What a plaguy little animal thou art to tease this gentleman so perseveringly. Come away this moment."

So saying he made another effort, and would have succeeded in carrying off my persecutor, if I had not entreated him to stop, and allow me to ask him a question. With manifest solicitude he paused, while I told him that I had called his dog by the name of Philippa, before he came within sight, which might account for the familiarity with which she had jumped upon me; adding, "if you do not think me very impertinent for making the inquiry, may I request you to let me know how you became possessed of this creature? I have a particular reason for wishing to know how and where you procured her."

"Sir," replied the unknown, "this greyhound

belongs to a friend of mine. I am not her master. She has followed me as I came to fish in yonder rivulet this morning; and this is all that I can tell you about her."

As he spoke a deep glow suffused his sallow cheeks, and was succeeded by a deadly paleness which bespoke agitation.

" Forgive me," answered I, " if I venture a little farther. A dog so strikingly like this, belonged to"—I was proceeding, when, interrupted by a footstep behind me, I turned round, and to my unspeakable amazement beheld Norah Kelly, who screamed aloud, dropped a pitcher of water which she held with one hand upon her head, and articulating the words " Oh, Masther Albert ! " fell senseless on the ground.

Lost in astonishment, and apparently much dismayed, the young man laid down his fishing apparatus, and attempted to raise poor Norah. I assisted, and we placed her under a tree, administering such aid as the stream afforded. While we watched her return to animation, the young man looking stedfastly in my face, said, " For heaven's sake, Sir, explain this mystery,

and be so kind as to say what is the cause of this poor woman's distress at sight of you; as likewise to tell me how you came to know this dog."

"Philippa's owner," answered I, "is my brother, Harold Fitzmaurice. Lead me to him, and I will promise to satisfy you."

Joy now lighted the features which had expressed so much recent anxiety, but the young man's countenance resumed an air of seriousness, and shaking his head, he answered,

"Thank heaven that some good angel has brought you to our succour; but alas! you must not see Harold without preparation. Let us try and revive Norah, after which, if you follow me, I will inform you of every thing concerning your brother."

In a little time Norah opened her eyes, which wept many a tear as she rested them on me. Enjoining silence, we supported her through the wood, till arriving at a small farm-house, the stranger beckoned a girl who stood near its entrance, and who appearing to comprehend his meaning ran forward to a little distance, and lifting a latch, threw open a door, and we en-

tered a large room, which seemed to have been employed as a barn. A fire of wood blazed at one end; a few articles of mere necessity were scattered up and down, and a clean straw mat which lay covered with a sheepskin or two, and raised from the floor upon a bench, furnished a sort of rude couch. I gazed impatiently for some token of Harold's approach.

"He is probably gone to gather berries from the neighbouring hedges, to make a fresh collar for Philippa," said the stranger. "This is his greatest amusement. He will soon return, but you must not take notice of him, or he will retire to another part of the building, where he sleeps. When opportunity occurs, we may seize upon it, but his humour must be watched."

Norah set about preparing some trout, while I sent off a courier to St. Helier with a line to the innkeeper, ordering my things to be given to the bearer, and resolved to share the comfortless abode of my poor brother.

When this was done, I begged to know how I should accost him when he returned from his ramble.

"You shall judge for yourself," said the

stranger: "If he looks melancholy, and hangs his head, say nothing. His case, I fear, is hopeless. I have had the best advice which St. Helier affords, and Dr. Simonde thinks him incurable. He is gentle and tasteful in the mind's twilight as in its meridian power, and you will often hear him speak in the language of our best poets, applying the words of Shakspeare and others to his own purposes; sometimes so appositely, as to make us doubt his derangement, were it not that proof is quickly given in a change of humour, and the progress of fever which is consuming him. He loves solitude; talks to himself; raves often of his mother and Albert, and some nameless friend, with whom he holds imagined converse. He takes little nourishment, and often starts, as if agitated by some painful recollection; but chiefly he mourns the loss of a pocket-book, which he says that a malignant spirit took away, and grieves that he has no wings to pursue the plunderer. I have questioned Norah, who knows nothing of any loss that he sustained, and I bought at St. Helier something of the tablet kind, which I hoped

to make him believe was his own, but he spurned it disdainfully. But stand back a little. See, here he is."

At this moment Harold, my dear Harold, whom I had last seen in bloom of health and intellect, entered, the picture of sorrow and decline. Pale and emaciated, he seemed to totter on the confines of the tomb, while the clear eloquent eye, and serene expression of his finely chiseled features, appeared to anticipate communion with celestial spirits.

My heart was wrung at sight of him, and notwithstanding the warning voice of his friend, I was darting instinctively forward, when Norah, gliding between us, made a sign to arrest my imprudence. Harold only glanced at me, and passed onward towards the fire. He seemed exhausted, and Norah gave him some lemonade, which he drank with avidity. He then laid down his hat, the crown of which he had filled with berries, while he left his head uncovered, and the wind playing through his beautiful curled hair of glossy brightness, had tossed it over his brow in the wildest picturesque.

He next began in silence to string the fruits of his labour on a thread of dry wiry grass, which he had brought in for the purpose, and Norah softly laid the trout which she had prepared, with some other little refreshment, on the stump of a tree, which served as a table, and stood near where he was resting.

He raised his eyes, and sighed. Norah looked entreatingly as she uttered, "Do, dear, eat a little bit. You starve yourself."

Harold gazed upon her, and, as if pursuing the chain of his own thoughts, unmindful of her request, burst into the language of Jaques:

"I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation—nor the musician's, which is fantastical—nor the courtier's, which is proud—nor the soldier's, which is ambitious—nor the lawyer's, which is politic—nor the lady's, which is nice—nor the lover's, which is all these—but it is a melancholy of mine own."

Then pausing for a moment, he took up another strain of the same kind from Cymbeline:

"Oh Melancholy!
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom—find
The ooze to shew what coast thy sluggish crare
Might eas'liest harbour in?"

Norah again supplicated him to eat. He smiled, and answered, "Poor thing; thou art a huge feeder. My mother did not tease me. No, she was gentle as 'the sweet south;' but give me back what I have lost, and I will eat."

I could no longer refrain, and taking the little enamel case from my breast, where I put it for safety on leaving Paris, I determined on trying the effect of sudden excitement, and stepping quietly from my retreat, stood before him, and presented his lost treasure.

"You are," said I, "the owner of this, and Albert is come to restore it to his brother."

Harold frowned, and drew back. A hectic gleam flashed across his cheeks, and his eyes were cast upon the earth, as if he tried to clear the confusion of his recollection amid the broken fragments of memory. I was silent, and waited the result. At length, raising his head, he grasped at the pocket-book or case, which I still held in my hand, and smiling benignantly, exclaimed: "Yes, thou art my good Ariel. My tricksy spirit; thou hast done it featly, and I would reward thee, but I cannot:

'Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor,
For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich,
And as the sun breaks thro' the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest habit.'

"I have no money; but I have power; and thou shalt be free. Yes, thou shalt indeed be free, for this is a noble service."

"Dear Harold, do you not remember me? I want no reward. Am I not Albert? Look at me; recollect the brother of your childhood; your companion at Glendruid; the son of your mother."

"Hah! cease, busy mocker. Breathe not her name, nor his—but I will not tell his fate. Thou shalt not say I did it. If such things be, and 'the spirits o'the dead may walk again—my mother appeared to me last night.' But I thank you, Sir; Albert is gone to heaven with his mother. I am going after them. Now I am ready. You have restored this talisman. It is an amulet, and will guard me from danger."

So saying, he pressed the tablet to his lips, laid it in his bosom without examining the contents, and dropped his head on my shoulder weary of exertion. I led him to the rustic sofa

which I have described, and he fell into a troubled slumber.

The most affecting sounds which can strike upon the ear of any human being, possessing a heart of ordinary sensibility, are the broken accents of mental derangement, which like a shattered mirror give back a thousand mutilated images to remind us of those forms which they can no longer faithfully reflect. All that I had heard and seen pierced me to the quick; but it was necessary to act, and not lose time in sorrowful reverie. The stranger, whose name Norah informed me was Crosbie, had gone to the farm-house hard by, to procure some additional accommodation for me, and returned just as a servant laden with fruit, jelly, and such sorts of niceties arrived. Norah took the basket which contained them, and, thanking the messenger, sent word to "the lady," that our patient was as usual.

With the aid of Mr. Crosbie I now prevailed on Annette Regnier, the owner of the farm-house already mentioned, and to whose benevolence the destitute trio had been long indebted

for food and lodging, to accept some compensation for the past, and make more comfortable provision for the future by an exchange of abodes. Before night, Harold was removed to the best apartment in the humble dwelling of this kind *fermière*, and every arrangement was made which the place admitted for his ease and tranquillity.

Dr. Simonde came shortly afterwards, and assured me, in reply to my anxious inquiries, that the utmost efforts of art would fail to restore my dear brother. To soothe and mitigate might, he said, be our pleasing care, but to cure was beyond human ability. He went to the couch to feel Harold's pulse, and was met by the touching question,

"'Say, can'st thou minister unto a mind diseased, or teach the dull cold hand of death to stay its progress?' Sir, I am bound to a distant shore where friends await me, and here is an ambassador come to convey me thither."

These incoherencies marked the fever of the brain, while the artery's feeble pulsations forbade the attempt to reduce it by medicine.

My whole attention was now devoted to my interesting charge. I wrote to my sisters, merely stating that unexpected circumstances detained me in Jersey; while I informed Gerald of the whole truth, and prepared him for my absence, till the eyes of my suffering Harold should be closed, and the last sad rites performed by fraternal love.

These cares disposed of, my next anxiety was to learn particulars of my brother's history, and discover what link it was that bound Mr. Crosbie to his fortunes, as also how Norah came to be with them, and all three on this island.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Leaving Norah one day to watch the invalid, and accompanied to the river side by him who was still a stranger, though I had learned by what name to call him, I obtained as we sat on the bank where we first met, all the intelligence which I sought, in the following narrative:

" You see before you one of those misguided men, who have paid a heavy penalty for their folly. I was scarcely nineteen, when, catching the contagion of the *times*, I associated myself with a set whose industry and talents were all employed to subvert the Government. How ill advised the measures which were adopted by a band of impetuous youths, events have proved, and I shall not tire you with repetition of public matters, but confine myself to a relation of such

circumstances as came under my immediate knowledge, and in which, unhappily for me, I was myself engaged. Mr. Lovett of Painesville was my uncle. He is dead, and his family I hear have not prospered; but I can say little of Irish people or affairs since I have found concealment necessary.

"My cousins, their friends the Talbots, and I, belonged to the united committee; I was much occupied, but sometimes went to your part of the country, and saw you at an evening muster when you were invested with military honours by poor Miss Talbot. At first I did not recollect where we had met. After our *great* failure, each consulted his safety in flight. I had no resources, and after suffering severe privation from cold and hunger, in bog and brake, I worked my passage in the disguise of a common sailor, and arrived in London by the return of a merchantman bound from Dublin to that port."

Arrived in the British metropolis, which for the rich is a theatre of all that can dazzle the senses, captivate the taste, and gratify the ambi-

tion of man — alas! what did I find? A wilderness more dreary than the desert, through the contrast which every street presented between my own objectless, pennyless abandonment, and the full tide of life which poured its busy stream along, whichever way I turned my eyes. A mere trifle constituted all my wealth, which a few days would necessarily exhaust. What was I to do? Where should I find resources? I walked forward not knowing whither I was directing my steps, and overwhelmed by wretchedness, till my spirits, which are naturally sanguine, began to re-act and I thought to myself; 'Well, at all events, I am unknown; my poverty and destitution secure my liberty; I have health and youth, and whatever change may take place in my circumstances must improve my lot, which can sink no lower.'

"Thus reasoning with my own mind, I felt somewhat revived. Weary at length from walking, I turned into the door of a house which seemed a tavern of humble description, and entered a room divided into boxes. The greater number of these compartments were already

appropriated, but taking possession of one which I found empty, I sat down and called for something to eat.

"While I sat contemplating the several groups around me, and picking up here and there a few words of the conversation so busily plied by men full of this world's futurities, of loss and gain; I was accosted by an elderly man, of respectable appearance, who, bowing as he entered the box in which I was seated, hoped that I should not be incommoded by his sharing it with me. I made a civil answer, though I should have liked his room better than his company. However, he was goodnatured and cheerful; and without being familiar, availed himself of his years to converse more freely and inquire respecting from whence I had come, and whither I was going, with a greater degree of familiarity than I should have permitted in a person of my own age.

"I soon informed my companion that I was a stranger, that I had received the education of a gentleman, and, for certain reasons connected with existing circumstances in Ireland, had left

my own country with a determination to try my fortune in England.

"'Perhaps I may be of use to you,' replied Mr. Knowles, which I perceived by looking accidentally into the crown of his hat, was the name of my new acquaintance. 'Employment is what you want no doubt, and it is the only thing to keep young people out of mischief. This is a difficult matter however to accomplish without being brought up regularly to some distinct occupation; what would you think of writing for a newspaper or review? You have been at the university, and your conversation proves to me that you have read; I dare say that you can write also; and if so, I can certainly put you in the way of making an honourable subsistence till the affairs of your country are more settled than at present, and you deem it expedient to return home.'

"I felt very grateful, and expressed my acknowledgments warmly, but as to '*writing*,' it seemed so vague a description that I knew not what to reply. I had written letters, and strung doggrels, but had never penned a paragraph for

the press in my life. 'No matter for that,' said Mr. Knowles; 'if you can write with ease and correctness, you will be supplied with subject-matter, and informed exactly how you are to treat it. Poetry will do you no good; it is not the fashion; few people read poetry now.'

"'But, Sir,' answered I, 'my sentiments may not accord with those of my employer, and though a particular work may be placed before me for review, you do not mean to say that because I am to be paid for analyzing its contents, I shall be expected to give an opinion contrary to the truth, and say the thing which I do not think.'

"'Pooh, pooh! You are a novice; never mind; all will be made easy, and come as naturally as possible in a little time. Such is the spread of literature, that men of all calibres may turn their talents to profit, but it will never do to stand shilly shally weighing the veracity of a judgment. If you engage your brains in the service of the public, you must accommodate yourself to the ruling taste; and an author should feel like an advocate at the bar; let him

make the most of the materials given, and leave the world to judge.'

"'Sir,' said I, 'a cause in court has two sides, and witnesses are called to substantiate or deny; but an author who disseminates what he believes to be false and injurious to the minds of those who may be influenced by what they read, is morally culpable of leading men astray. Is it not so?'

"'If you are a *casuist,*' replied my benefactor, 'adieu to authorship; that is, unless you publish at your own cost, and take the consequences of being unpopular. Come with me; it is all stuff and nonsense; the world will care very little about the moral of your conduct. Write to amuse, or to meet the reigning notions, of whatever kind they may be, and you will find it easy to live extremely well on the fruits of your industry. Should you take my advice, I will introduce you to a man who is first rate in the trade, and you will step at once into a liberal salary. What signifies the difference between being the slave of your judgment,

or your employer; but if you cannot bend in graver matters, there is the whole region of fiction open before you. If you have but the alacrity of invention requisite to supply the avidity for literary stimulus, becoming more and more fashionable every day, you may secure a handsome income with very little trouble. For this purpose, you must remember a few leading hints. Mystery and personality are the great engines of power, and managed judiciously you may do what you please with them. The nearer you can approach to a libel without subjecting yourself to an action, the better. Vicious characters interest more than virtuous, which are too tame for the present taste. You may venture upon the most atrocious acts, and dress your tale in the most glaring colours; you may outrage all probabilities, and make use of the most preposterous machinery, provided you take special care to excite. This is an opium eating age. The plodding day of learning is gone by, and mankind are pleased with whatever amuses, without calling for exertion. To float the mind down a silver stream,

undisturbed by the toil of the oar, is what people require now when they open a book, and if *you* can furnish the tide you are a lucky fellow, and your fortune is made.'

"Persuaded by Mr. Knowles' encouragement, though not struck by the conscientiousness of his arguments, I enlisted under his guidance, and waited on him next day for the purpose of being introduced to Mr. Margin, a great West End bookseller, who, through the recommendation of Mr. Knowles, promised to employ me immediately. Mr. Margin desired me to call next morning, and in the interim made arrangements for my reception amongst the various people who found occupation in his extensive establishment. He was a sensible man, and had read a great deal; but the *tradesman* preponderated over the literary character, and taking me apart for a few minutes, he said, 'Mr. Crosbie, my business requires that I should leave nothing to individual opinion. I take a *side* in all matters of public discussion, and, you understand me, I do not deal in *fancy articles.* I have desired you to be put into

training. You will find your work easy and pleasant I have no doubt, but as my reputation depends upon my consistency, there is a proper person appointed to revise whatever is written here. A single injudicious paragraph, you are aware, might be mischievous, so I always say it is better to be on the safe side. When the fashion leads, we must *follow* of course, but we *never anticipate*.'

"Whatever my faults had been, I was a stranger to the lessons of Mr. Knowles and Mr. Margin, and I did not relish the maxims which they taught; but necessity was pressing, and I commenced my labours of the press. I will not trouble you with the details of my first attempts. If I could have written as I thought, I should not have disliked the occupation, but to puff what I disapproved, and deny what I admired, was an inversion of free will which I felt extremely irksome.

"Induced by the solicitations of several young men, like myself in the service of Mr. Margin, I joined a club which they formed amongst themselves, and to which unfortunately they ad-

mitted some very improper associates. Hazard was proposed. I pleaded ignorance, not being anxious to lose the very little money that I possessed; but encouraged to try my fortune, and ashamed to confess my poverty, I submitted to be taught. A few rounds familiarized me with the mere machinery of the game. I was allowed to win twenty pounds, but when, presumptuous from success, I felt inclined to proceed, the tables were quickly turned, and I was pillaged of every shilling in my purse. As is usual on such occasions, I *then* continued to play in hopes of a turn in my favour, but my evil genius presided, and each new trial only plunged me deeper and deeper in debt.

"Mr. Knowles observed the vortex into which I had been drawn, and gave me warning of the pitfall which yawned beneath my feet; but, urged by constant temptation, I fell into the trap laid to deceive me, and ended by being inextricably undone. I became idle and careless, was reprimanded, rebelled, and at length was informed that I might seek another employment more suited to my taste.

" Piqued at what I considered a contemptuous mode of dismissal, I took Mr. Margin at his word, seized my hat, and walked out of his printing-office, to return thither no more.

" Now comes that part of my story which I would sink a thousand fathom deep if I could, but you shall hear it all, and may the pain of confession prove some expiation of the guilt in which I became involved. My finances were at the lowest ebb. What to do, or whither to go, I. knew not. When I reached London I brought with me the principles of a gentleman, and revolted from the idea of a lie: but my first step was to relinquish my own sense of honour and integrity; my next to associate myself with gamblers.

" Alas! the devil's work is all down hill, as has been said by some quaint writer of a former day, and so I found it. Wandering about, and dreading to encounter the person to whom I owed a sum which I was utterly unable to pay, I met a young man whom, till now, I had always avoided as a scorpion. He knew of my condition, and, taking advantage of it, accosted me

with an appearance of sympathy which overcame my repugnance to speak with him. He requested me to accompany him; while we walked together, he developed a scheme, and with the deepest anguish of spirit I have to reveal that I became a party in this horrible plan, which was no other than to join a band of highway robbers, many of whom were gentlemen by birth like myself.

"My confederates were six in number. We established a rendezvous, and agreed to share all the plunder of which we might possess ourselves. Our first exploit was unhappily successful; we returned from our adventure laden with spoil, but when I reached the obscure dwelling in which I was to hide my head from day-light, and threw myself upon a pallet, no language can express the horrors of remorse which pierced my soul. Yet it seemed too late to recede. A second midnight excursion was crowned by a rich booty, and the following day being Sunday we agreed to go to St. Paul's, where we calculated on finding a great crowd likely to be assembled on that particular occasion. The hour

arrived, and I shuddered again when I thought that sacrilege was now going to be added to my crimes; but I proceeded, goaded forward by him who had ensnared me, and who, when he saw me falter, exclaimed, "What canting folly! You have passed the Rubicon, and are in the enemy's country. On your banner must be henceforth inscribed the brave man's motto, 'victory or death.'

"We entered St. Paul's by different doors, and at different periods of the service. I went in just at that moment of the communion service when, by an extraordinary coincidence, the venerable divine who was officiating pronounced the solemn prohibition, 'thou shalt not steal,' with an emphasis which vibrated through my frame. I stood as if transfixed, and a sudden revulsion of my blood was followed by such giddiness in my head that I felt as if overtaken by the destroying angel in the midst of my iniquity. I gained the nearest door, and reviving in the open air, stopped but an instant to recover, and then rushed to my resolve.

"Darting through bye-ways, of which I knew

every winding, I reached our rendezvous; snatched a pocket-book which was hidden behind a wainscot, and which contained bank notes to a large amount; collected every thing of value still undisposed of, and packing up a few articles of wearing apparel for my own use in a portmanteau, which I took upon my shoulder, and dividing the plunder into two parcels, with perfect recollection of the parties who had been robbed, I left the house, and flying with the celerity of lightning, first deposited the packets sealed and directed at the residences of their several owners, and gaining Charing-cross by the shortest route, threw myself into a coach just starting for Bristol.

"Arrived at that port, I purchased a sailor's suit with part of a small sum which I had reserved for my own necessities, and got on board a ship bound to Ireland. Stress of weather obliged the captain to run into the bay of Galway, which was not our original destination. Being now in my own country, I wrote to some of my friends concealing my retreat, but mentioning my return, and requesting pecuniary

aid; stating that I did not intend to make any application to my own family under present circumstances, but promising a punctual repayment at some future day, of the sum which I now required as a loan. I received an answer to only one of my letters, and that inclosed me a five pound note, instead of fifty, which I asked, and concluded with the following words:

" 'Your friends are all scattered, taken, or executed. I advise you to depart as speedily as possible, lest your fate should resemble theirs. By what I hear of your father's resentment against you, I should imagine that your reception at ——— would not be very cordial.'

" It was now indeed time to depart as I was desired to do. To conceal myself was essential to safety, and it occurred to me, that I would for the present moment take refuge in one of the wild and interesting islands of Arran on the western coast. Accordingly I took boat, and reached the largest of the cluster, the caverned shore of which, inviting to the smuggler, from the steepness of its rocks, and the shelter which they afford for contraband goods, was alike

tempting to one who was himself proscribed, and I rejoiced at having gained its peaceful asylum. Here, unknown and secluded, I had time for useful meditation. The image of that old clergyman, whose grey hairs seemed to have been shaken at me never quitted my imagination. I heard 'Thou shalt not steal,' in every blast which howled through the solitary cave, in every mournful wail of the curlieu's voice. I felt myself debased, degraded beyond redemption, as to this world. I had lost caste, and desired no more than to retire into some distant quarter of the globe, far removed from home, country, and former friends, where I might humble my heart before that Being whose ordinances I had neglected—whose commands I had disobeyed.

" Sauntering one day along the rocky border, and straining my eye-balls over the watery plain, I descried a little bark buffeting the waves, which were rough and foamy. She was trying hard to make the shallow inlet beneath the spot from which I watched her progress towards the island. Fearful of surprise, I cau-

tiously descended, and hid myself securely from observation. The boat at length reached land, and I witnessed its departure, after having deposited a young man, his aged attendant, a dog, and some luggage, on the shore. I should have walked away unseen, had it not been for the tears which I saw the old woman shed, as with anxious haste, and in apparent agony, she supported the steps of her companion, directing his path over the slippery ground which they had to traverse. I went up to them, thinking that I might be useful, and was met by your brother Harold, and poor Norah.

"The former talked incoherently, as he does now, or rather, to speak more correctly, he expressed himself as rationally and as poetically as he does now, but without any reference to the questions which I addressed to him. The latter informed me, that after a long and fruitless search for her youngest son, of whom a report had been circulated that he was seen on board a ship in the bay of Dublin, after the storm which had been fatal to Kelly's boat, the poor creature was making the best of her way to Glendruid, con-

vinced that her son's ghost had appeared instead of himself, when in the midst of a wide mountain moor she encountered Harold Fitzmaurice. His mind, though evidently deranged, was not, she says, so absent as it has since become. He not only recognized the antient follower of his family, but entreated her not to leave him, saying that he would be her child in the place of those who were gone. He often called her his nurse. At other times he said that she was the Banshee of his house, and seemed to have a thousand recollections, sometimes of pain, and sometimes pleasure, awakened by her presence. The faithful Philippa, worn almost to a skeleton, still followed her master's wandering steps. Norah knew that you were in America. She had heard of your uncle by name, and, being no geographer, she foresaw no difficulty in discovering his abode. Warm-hearted as ignorant, she resolved to seek you.

" 'I will go with him all over the big round world,' said Norah; 'but will never give over till I put him safe into Master Albert's keepen.'

"I immediately resolved to unite myself to

this desolate pair, and befriend them as far as I could. The money which I had, though a very small sum, sufficed, for present purposes in a place so rude, where none but real wants were to be provided against. Medical advice would have been valuable, but it was not to be procured.

"I determined, however, on taking advice for my poor friend whenever I could find an opportunity. I had often seen but was not acquainted with him, and now rejoiced in the idea of making the remainder of my life more worth preserving than the past portion of it, by devoting myself to an act of benevolence, in trying to alleviate your brother's melancholy lot.

"At length a ship came into Galway bay to re-fit, and the captain having come over to settle some affairs with a man who lived in our island, I took advantage of a meeting with him, to arrange for transporting my two companions and myself to America. We were to touch at a French port, take in some articles of trade, and thence proceed to New York, from which place I designed to address you. We went on board

with a prospering gale, which was soon exchanged for rough weather. The vessel sprung a leak, and though, as I have since heard, she did not go to the bottom, it was thought advisable to put us passengers into a boat.

"This was accomplished, and we three left the ship. Poor Philippa accompanied her master, who would not be separated from her. All our little effects were necessarily abandoned, and your brother has never ceased to grieve for the loss of a box which contained books and other things of value to him, and which every now and then he recollects, misses, and regrets.

"We providentially landed at Jersey, but I found my invalid charge had suffered so much from wet and cold, that it would have been impracticable for him to continue the voyage. I therefore put him under the care of an apothecary at St. Helier, and found my slender resources coming to an end. In this situation we became acquainted with Annette Regnier, who used to bring her vegetables to market in the town; and her kind heart became interested in our forlorn condition. She invited us to take

up with what accommodation she could spare, and I endeavour to repay her charity as far as I am able by cultivating her garden and watching over her farm, when she and her son, a youth of fifteen, are absent from home. For your brother's sake I have gladly accepted every aid which was offered, and—"

At this moment Crosbie's narrative, which seemed nearly at an end, was interrupted by the trampling of horses, immediately behind where we sat, and on turning my head suddenly round I saw a lady of uncommon loveliness, mounted on a beautiful Arabian, and followed by a groom. She stopped on seeing my companion, and beckoned to him. He rose to meet her, and they conversed together during a few minutes at a little distance from me. The lady then continued her ride. I had never till then seen so heavenly a countenance, the expression of which was never to be forgotten. I was rivetted to the spot, and gazed intently after this angelic vision till a thick copse wood hid her from my view.

In answer to my inquiries concerning her, I

learned from Crosbie that she was a Miss Bouverie, and lived not far from Annette's farm. Her parents had been but a short time in the island, and had come thither for their daughter's health. Miss Bouverie was an only child, and the idol of her father and mother. In her daily rides she had met Philippa with her collar of scarlet berries, which it was poor Harold's principal amusement to string afresh and tie round her neck. Desiring to know who was the owner of this animal, which had attracted her attention by its beauty and fanciful costume, she became interested in the history which Annette gave her of the young stranger and his Irish nurse. She immediately ordered that Norah might be sent to La Bergerie, which is the name of a pretty spot inhabited by Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie about a mile from the farm of Regnier.

Not a day has passed since then without bearing testimony to the benevolence of these inestimable people. Broths, jellies, fruit, whatever in short it was thought might contribute to Harold's comfort, was delicately and liberally supplied; while Norah was laid under the strictest

injunctions not to betray the name or condition of her master or his friend. The name by which they were known was Campbell, and they passed for brothers who were shipwrecked on the coast of Jersey, and detained by sickness from quitting the island.

Crosbie next informed me that about a fortnight previous to my arrival, Dr. Simonde, the medical attendant, had prepared him for an event which he considered as not far distant; and added, with a sigh, "How gladly would I exchange my lot for Harold's, and pass from a life of degradation to the Christian's rest."

CHAPTER XIX.

Still dwelling on this mournful theme, we regained the house, and some days elapsed unmarked by any particular circumstance. Harold's strength was constantly decreasing. At intervals I flattered myself that reason would resume her sway, and that the mind, like the surface of a lake which had been disturbed by the northern blasts would gradually recover its tranquillity when the harsh winds of adversity ceased to blow; but these hopes were frustrated by sudden relapses. I determined that, however lingering, I would await the *end*, and my whole time was now absorbed between the care of alleviating my brother's sufferings, and opening Crosbie's mind to the consolatory promises of eternal salvation for all who repent of past transgression.

The wanderings of my own conduct, and the process by which comfort had reached my breast, afforded a clue to the heart of a fellow in despondency, and I perceived with joy that the work prospered. Whole days were spent by this young man upon the border of that stream which first allured me to the place of Harold's retreat, in pouring out prayer for forgiveness to a God of mercy, and in studying the sacred volume which contains a balsam for the sorest corrosions of awakened conscience.

Crosbie was a highly interesting character, and as I became more intimate with him, I daily discovered some latent excellence which only required to be developed by the light of truth directed with a friendly hand. His mind, replete with various talent, only wanted that safe compass to guide his course, without which human genius and learning are but fire-damps ready to explode, and involve their possessor in destruction.

I spoke to him of Quebec, and proposed establishing him, if possible, in some reputable independence. "Never, my friend," answered

Crosbie: "I will not return to society from which I am deservedly an outcast. I have resolved what I will do. Send me to that retirement in which you first learned to hold communion with your own heart. My remaining term of life, be it long or short, shall be spent in wholesome solitude."

I was pleased with this resolution, not only as evincing the sincerity of feeling which suggested such a sacrifice, but because I, whose prospects were too uncertain to admit of my extending patronage to any one, felt, that in this case I might be of the greatest use in promoting the views of a man whose claims on my gratitude were as tender as unchangeable. We therefore agreed, that when our present cares were terminated, we would lose no time in prosecuting the plan thus laid down for futurity.

While Crosbie strayed from hill to valley, copse to dell, bent on meditation, my time was occupied with Harold. When I quitted him, he was restless till my return; and whenever he could see Norah, Philippa, and me, near him at the same instant, a heavenly expression of se-

rene joy would light his languid eye with star-like brilliancy.

In the short excursions which I made to breathe fresh air, the image of Miss Bouverie, I knew not why, continually flitted across my thoughts, and I always involuntarily turned my steps in the direction of La Bergerie, moved by a vague hope of meeting her again. I was disappointed however, though each succeeding day brought proof of that sweet charity, which sympathizing in distress takes delight in alleviating its pressure; but I saw not the hand which dispensed continual comfort to my poor invalid, and returned from every ramble, lamenting my ill fortune. Yet what had I to say to Miss Bouverie, who had been assured a thousand times through Crosbie that I was deeply sensible of her goodness? Notwithstanding this question, I would have given a diadem for another glimpse of her beautiful form.

Several weeks had glided by when Annette Regnier suddenly informed me one day, that the family of Bouverie had taken their departure from the island, and that so precipitately that

nothing more was known than that they were gone to France. Strange to say, this intelligence, in which I had little perceivable interest, absolutely stunned me, and it was some time before I could reason myself out of the folly of such strong emotion as was excited by the unwelcome news that my romance was at an end.

In my walk that morning, I marched directly up the avenue to La Bergerie. On former occasions I had always passed the gate, but I now went boldly to the hall-door, which was opened by an old woman. Entering the house, as if commissioned to do so, I sauntered at leisure through all the apartments, pleasing myself with imagining what part of the house had been inhabited by the fair object of my admiration. A beautiful little dressing-room, which opened on a veranda filled with fragrant plants, was the spot which fancy immediately selected for Miss Bouverie, and while I stood contemplating the chair placed by a small table, and occupied perhaps by this lovely creature while employed in her daily pursuits, I spied a broken harp-string on the floor, which told that the instrument to

which it belonged had been a tenant here, and confirmed the guess which allotted this pretty room to its mistress.

I seized on the relique with enthusiasm, and wandered into the pleasure-grounds. A rustic temple invited me to rest, and I entered it with my faithful companion, Philippa. A sycamore table stood in the midst, and I found upon it a small wicker basket filled with berries, such as were strung round the dog's neck.

"These berries," said I, "were certainly gathered by her own hand;" and I eagerly emptied the basket, in the bottom of which I found a glove, in which I could trace the form of those delicate fingers to which it had appertained. Here was another prize of which I possessed myself.

On returning to the house, I put some questions to the old sybil who guarded the premises, but obtained little satisfaction. She knew nothing of the Bouveries, except that they came and went; that Miss Bouverie's health was restored by the mild climate of Jersey; that her name was Mona; that she was an only child,

and much beloved by all the domestics, as well as by her parents, who were wrapped up in her; but the ancient Margueretta had no poetry in her composition, nor could I infuse the slightest romance into her answers. Her broom never paused while she spoke, and her "lack lustre" eye did not sparkle with a single ray of intelligence as she pronounced the magical sounds of "Mam'selle Mona."

My dreams were of short continuance. As I turned from the gate of La Bergerie to go home, I met Crosbie hastening towards me, so completely out of breath, that he stood during a few seconds gasping, and utterly unable to articulate a syllable. Petrified by the belief that my dear brother had made his final exit in my absence, I had not courage to speak. When Crosbie recovered a little, he informed me, that Harold had wakened from a profound sleep, in his perfect senses, and that the rapid change in his countenance seemed to indicate approaching dissolution. That Annette had sent for Dr. Simonde, and that Norah remained with my brother, who inquired anxiously for me. I

darted forward like the lightning's flash, and was soon at his bedside.

What a scene now met my heart. The bright clear eye of my dying Harold was fixed affectionately upon me, as I drew aside his curtain, and his cold hand was soon locked in mine.

"Welcome, dearest Albert," were the first words that broke silence. Norah sobbed aloud. I put her gently out of the room, and returned to the bed unable to speak. Harold perceived that I wept, and pressing my hand, said in a low but distinct accent, "Do not shed tears, my brother, for me. I have lived long enough. My days have been few and evil; I have been punished far less than I deserve. Albert, return not to the paths and companions of our youth. Their ways are not of pleasantness, nor are their paths of peace."

These few words, indelibly engraven on my memory, were uttered with difficulty, and exhausted nature required a pause, of which I took advantage to tell him briefly of the change which my habits and principles had undergone. I told him of Geraldine and Maria, and as I

spoke of their happiness, a beautiful glow, like that of departing sunshine on the evening landscape, overspread his sweet countenance, and he added in a faint voice, "Yes, they were ever good and dutiful, and deserved to have it said to each, 'thou wert ever with me, all that I have is thine.'"

The doctor entered, and was beginning to encourage his patient, when Harold waved his hand, and arrested the flattering falsehood ere it escaped the physicians lips: "Do not try to deceive me," said my dying brother; "I go to the invisible world; pray that I may find admission amongst the spirits of the just made perfect; but do not endeavour to stay my flight. I long to be in heaven with my mother."

As nothing could be done, I dismissed Dr. Simonde, and taking my post at the bedside, read words of comfort from the sacred volume, which poured upon the departing soul the balm of celestial repose. I then knelt down and sent up a petition to the Throne of Grace, which had fervency at least to recommend its supplication, and it was heard. Uplifted hands and

eyes bore testimony to inward joy after the faltering tongue had ceased to move, and a placid smile bespoke the grateful heart. A slumber, soft as that of infant peace succeeded, from which Harold awoke no more, and one short sigh was the spirit's pass-port of eternity.

How eloquent was that tranquil image,

> "Ere death's effacing fingers
> Had swept the lines where beauty lingers;"

which seemed to realize the anticipations of those heavenly mansions where a mother's pious love was ready to welcome her beloved child into the presence of his God!

I gazed on the still but impressive scene with tearful eyes, but nature's pang was speedily followed by thankfulness for the happy exchange which I now firmly believed Harold to have made from darkness and sorrow to light and bliss. I called Crosbie and the faithful Norah. The former was strongly affected, but after paying a silent tribute to the memory of his friend, he started from the room to exert that kind zeal which had long been employed for my poor brother, in sparing me, now that he was no

more, the anxiety of those melancholy cares that devolve on survivorship.

Norah was a picture of tenderness and woe. She seemed to lose, in this object of attachment, the last remnant of earthly interest. She had gathered up the broken fragments of affection that still fluttered in the breeze. Every scattered thought, every lacerated feeling, which misfortune had not quite annihilated was bestowed on Harold, and in her constant solicitude for his preservation she seemed to forget the misery of her own bereavement. Harold was gone, and Norah sat in motionless despair, neither wailing nor vociferating, as is the custom of her country when death has seized his victim, but pale, and cold, and still as he on whom her tearless eyes were rivetted.

When those rites were closed which act the tyrant's part a *second* time, by removing from our view the last lingering vestige of what we loved, I prepared for our departure. A magnificent ever green oak threw its shade over the spot of which I made choice for Harold's tomb; and a hedge of roses and sweet brier which

Annette Regnier promised to watch with care, was placed to guard the narrow enclosure from profane intrusion, while a simple urn, bearing no other inscription that the initial letters of my brother's name, with the date of his birth and final exit, was the only memorial which marked the grave.

Having bid a fond farewell to the little valley which shelters it, we hastened to St. Helier, there to make arrangement for our future plans, and as soon as I had provided for Norah's return to Ireland, Crosbie and I set sail for America. A long voyage afforded me increasing opportunity of admiring the brilliant talents of this young man, and deploring the unhappy effects of wrong principles, which, by leading the mind astray, render intellect a curse rather than a blessing.

I cannot refrain from observing in this place, on the responsibility of high mental powers; if the weak or stupid man be warped from virtue he generally injures himself alone, while the man of genius becomes a hydra-headed monster of mischief, when let loose upon society

without the curb of moral restraint, because his influence is multiplied by those very energies of understanding which, when rightly directed, augment the sum of usefulness, and his example allures multitudes to imitation of his actions. Crosbie was a true penitent, and the most distressing reflection connected with his history was that the debasing character of his ill conduct, though in the eye of heaven perhaps less guilty than a thousand modes of crime which are sanctioned by human opinion, so preyed upon his sense of shame as to exclude him for ever from society, in which nature had formed him to be a distinguished ornament.

I was met, on landing at Quebec, by Gerald Courtenay, to whom I introduced my companion. On the following day my uncle's will was produced in presence of a few friends whom he most respected. It began with legacies to these gentlemen of a thousand pounds each, and after liberal annuities to a few tried and faithful dependants, finished by appointing Gerald and me joint heirs in equal proportion, of all his estates, real and personal.

Overwhelmed with gratitude and astonishment, I knew not how to believe in the extent of my good fortune. Here were riches beyond the dreams of my wildest ambition, and I never prayed more fervently than that I might not abuse them. How enviable are the fresh and benevolent feelings excited by sudden prosperity, ere habits of indulgence have deadened the powers of enjoyment, and satiety has paralyzed the unselfish impulses of our nature! I experienced, as may be imagined, the most agitating emotion, in which various counteracting feelings were mingled. So afraid was I of trusting myself that, lest this recent accession of wealth might produce the hardening effects upon my heart which I had witnessed in others, I hastened to execute a deed which I deposited in Gerald's hands, settling ten thousand pounds immediately on my elder sister. The joy which I felt when I had placed this sum beyond my power of control, was delightful; and sincere as was the concern with which I mourned the loss of a benefactor, beyond all praise, I confess to having been sometimes intoxicated with

the prospect before me, and so charmed at the idea of quitting a profession which I abhorred, that it required all the superior steadiness of Gerald's mind, to prevent me from committing some extravagance.

When my spirits had subsided, I turned my attention to Crosbie's affairs, and finding him irrevocably determined never to revisit his native land, I procured his appointment as confidential agent to the fur company, and accomplished his retreat into that banishment which had been the scene of my own life during three years. Pleased at having achieved what he most desired, the poor fellow set out upon his journey, with a heart lightened of much anxiety, and a promise to maintain continual correspondence with the friends whom he left behind. Nothing that Gerald and I could devise for his convenience or amusement was neglected, and as he was impatient to be gone, it was my duty to employ the second rite of hospitality, and "speed the parting guest" who would not suffer himself to be detained.

Methodical and prudent as my uncle had

always been, no great commercial establishment can be dissolved without difficulties and delay. I was obliged to take several journies, and many months elapsed before we were permitted to bid Quebec a final adieu. This long interval was beguiled by frequent intercourse with my sisters. They were at Elwood Park when they received intelligence from me of the unlooked for revolution in my fortune.

Of Harold's history I had not mentioned a syllable, till the event of his death led to the painful necessity of announcing it. I simply related the melancholy fact, news of which arrived as the travellers were returning homewards, and the sisters were glad to bury those feelings which were too deeply affectionate to be shaken off like the dust from their carriage wheels, in the retirement of their country abode. Tranquillity was soon, however, restored to their bosoms, from the reflection, that death was hailed as the most welcome blessing by him whose loss they lamented.

I received the most delightful tribute of acknowledgment from Geraldine for the proof

which my poor uncle's liberality had enabled me to give her of my affection; and was overpaid a thousand fold by the happiness which she expressed in being rendered independent.

After thanking me much more than I deserved, for that which was so pleasing an act to myself, she added,

"You bid me tell you whether I can endure returning to England? No gratitude can exceed mine at having been taught, by foreign travel, a more just appreciation of the true value of home than it is possible to feel without being able to compare, as an actual eye-witness, the most favoured nations of the Continent with our own happy Britain; and I cannot help thinking that all who return to our island shores unimpressed by this sentiment have contrived to miss the moral of the tale. Manners indeed are captivating abroad, but as life is not a drawing-room, the most beautiful polish on the surface is not enough, and we look to the grain that will bear rubbing on to the end, when the varnish of youth and beauty shall have passed away."

I heard from Maria; I learned that she had met in Switzerland with her cousin, the elder brother of my friend and favourite, Gerald. I did not know him personally, but her pen was eloquent in his praise, and drew his portrait as follows:

"I never have felt more proud of my kindred or my country than in comparing Mordaunt Courtenay with every competitor in society, from Lausanne, where we met, to Naples, where we left him. He is a noble creature; there is a grandeur in truth, which imparts both to form and features a dignity of expression, that no other quality can bestow. It is a necromancer in the improvement of beauty. Mordaunt is travelling with Lord Sinclair, who seems but little likely to profit by the society of his admirable tutor. What author is it who says, that "a childhood of indulgence produces a youth of dissipation, a manhood of insignificance, and an old agè of repentance." Poor Lord Sinclair threatens to go through the first three parts of the series, and it will be well if the last be not marked by folly rather than contrition.

"Albert, the latter years have been eventful in our family; but I will not look back to the sorrowful past, when we have so much reason to rejoice in the present, and a hope for the future. You must come to England; I must see you married, and have you near me. When we take our daily ride, we look at every pretty place in our neighbourhood, and fancy you its possessor."

At length the wished-for hour arrived. Gerald and I divided two hundred thousand pounds, after providing for all those who had been employed in my uncle's concerns, and whose conduct in their several stations merited reward. Two deserving young men were established in the lucrative trade which we relinquished, and with light hearts and favouring breeze we bade adieu to the shores of America.

I determined, on quitting Quebec, that I would in the first instance revisit Ireland. If I went directly to Elwood I might find myself too powerfully enthralled by the numberless attractions that awaited me there, and forget my dear, but barren, Ithaca. Nothing, I re-

solved, should interfere with my design of purchasing an estate in my native land, yet I feared temptation, and dreaded nothing so much as being shaken in my purpose by the entreaties of my sister. Absenteeism had ever been a topic of my severest reprobation, and I had always held, that however expedient it might be to export our beggars, nothing could excuse the emigration of any man possessed of money or talents which may be useful at home. Though conscience suggested this language, I felt the sacrifice which I intended to make, for, dearly as I loved my country, every association connected with it was embittered by self-reproach, the heaviest clog on memory. Still, however, as if desirous to try how much suffering I could endure, like a school-boy who inflicts self-torment by holding his fingers in the candle's flame, I felt an irresistible impulse to look again upon the scenes of my youth, and recall the images of time gone by, in the same spot which had once been animated by their living realities.

I had been informed in a letter from Norah that she had found her lost child, her darling of

happier days, and had folded "Timsey" in her maternal embrace. His almost miraculous escape from drowning had struck with powerful impression on his young mind, and induced a serious turn of character, which now rendered him the prop and solace of his aged parent; but the terror of being taken up as an accessory, or called upon as an informer, prevented his return home, and it was not till after a long absence, and the wretched peasantry of Ireland had buried their pikes to resume the plough, that Tim Kelly ventured to come back a full grown man to the land of his fathers. Norah wrote me word that she and her son were living in what we call the Black Mountain, and trying to earn money enough to rebuild a cabin on the old site amongst the rocks, where her family had anciently divided dominion with the sea-gulls.

"Plase your Honour, Tim (said she) will never have pace or rest on the dry ground till he's fairly in the water, and, wid the help o' God, if we could once get to the ould nook, and I could live to see my poor boy in a snug little bit of a boat upon the bay, with a nit of his own,

I would'nt begridge how soon the Lord o' glory tuk me himself, becaase I'd be sure to laive him in good keer, be raison o' Kitty Carroll promussen to marry him whinever he'd be able for to mintane her: so I'd lie down in the airth contint."

To build a cottage for Norah, and crown the ambition of Tim by the gift of a decked hooker, which would make him king of the bay, became an object of feverish anxiety with me; so, reader, you must come to the end of my voyage, of which, as well as my parting with Gerald, who hastened off to North Wales, you must excuse all description, and grant a short indulgence to my pen, till I take it up again to retrace the emotions with which I beheld a glorious sun rising over the cliffs of Glendruid.

CHAPTER XX.

A VISIT to the scene of childhood after long absence and variety of fortune, has been a hacknied theme, and there is no one, perhaps, in whatever situation, who has not felt what it was to recollect, on returning to the theatre of early pleasures, the sports of those joyous years when life and happiness are identified. Providence has so ordained, that the mind naturally retains a sense of enjoyment longer than that of pain; and hence it is that the healthful glow and careless gaiety of our childish days, when remembered in contrast with the subsequent sorrows and infirmities incident to maturer age, establish a general but fallacious belief that the earliest is the happiest period of existence. It

is not considered that each succeeding stage has its own trials; and the trifling disappointments, the little restraints, and petty punishments imposed on the infant delinquent, are as hard to bear, at the time of their infliction, as weightier suffering in riper years; and it is only when seen in the distance that they vanish into insignificance, just as undulations in the landscape, which rose into the dignity of hills while we stood upon a level with their bases, dwindle into an unvaried flat when we take a view of the country from some neighbouring mountain. In the feelings of others I may be mistaken, but not in my own; and it was with unmixed anguish of soul that I opened my eyes upon Glendruid.

Before I reached the home of my youth, I had formed some half purposes of purchasing the land on which it stood; planting, building, and consecrating every labour of improvement to the manes of those who were gone; but these visions melted into air at sight of the familiar objects around me, on each of which was suspended some harassing recollection of my own unworthiness.

"No," said I to myself. "Were I a Roman Catholic I would construct a cell, and place an altar here, to which I would make a pilgrimage at stated times, and perform an expiatory penance, but to *live* at Glendruid I see is impossible; for I must either be lost to the remembrance of the past, or in ceasing to recall lose the keen sense of former errors, which is my best guide for futurity. Banishing, therefore, from my thoughts all intention of residing amid the ghosts of former days, I wrapped a large cloak about me, and alone, unknown, and sad, turned into the pathway leading from the strand, leaving a small boat in waiting to re-convey me to the opposite side of the bay, from which I had rowed across.

The first pause which I made was on the tiny platform which marked the site of Norah's former dwelling. Not a vestige of the lowly habitation remained, and there was nothing left to indicate that it had ever existed, except a black patch of earth, which I recognised as the old fire-place. Fancy conjured up the forms of poor Kelly and his sons returning wet and

weary from the world of waters on which they plied their daily toil, and repaying Norah's blazing faggot with her cabin's humble fare to welcome their approach, by news gleaned from "the night-wandering skiff;" or in default of human intelligence, amusing her by some mysterious legend of the deep.

I placed myself on the spot where, grouped with my brothers, now no more, and an old faithful Scotchman, of whom I had not heard for years, I stood endeavouring to restore the unfortunate Norah to animation on that awful night which left her, as she believed, childless and a widow.

I next ascended the cliffs, studiously avoiding the shortest way to the house, through fear of meeting any of its present inhabitants; but the track which used to lead across the fields was overgrown with grass as though no foot had recently pressed with rapid step upon its course. As I drew nearer to my once cheerful home, I was chilled to the heart by the desolation which surrounded me; all was changed, and the wild prier crept in tangled masses on the ground, as

if to repel intruders from a scene of which melancholy had taken undisputed possession. An outside shutter of green laths, which had once served to exclude the southern sun from my mother's favourite sitting-room, flapped to and fro upon its rusty hinges, which creaked heavily to the blast. Its fellow lay on the ground.

No human being was to be seen, the hall-door stood ajar, I darted in, and visited in succession every apartment. That in which I was born, then the nursery, where many a tear had been shed when its ancient presiding genius denied me access to that mother whose tenderness I requited ungratefully in after life. I went into my father's study, marked the spot in which his arm-chair used to stand, traced from the pencil of my brother Charles in the marble chimney-piece, the grotesque resemblances of men, beasts, and birds, which his lively fancy, seizing on imperfect similitudes, had drawn upon its mottled surface. No living creature interrupted my progress through the house, except a moping owl which, frightened by the hollow sound of

my footsteps, fluttered into my face from a dark recess in which she "held her solitary reign."

From thence I proceeded to the Glyn, sat on the rustic seat, now broken and dismantled, from which, gazing on the tide beneath, I used to envy the waves as they receded from the shore to join with ocean. Here did my gentle mother retire to pour forth the sorrows of her soul, and here also did her rebel sons pollute the bower which ought to have been hallowed by her virtues, by meeting under its shade to weave those devices, silly as iniquitous, which marred her peace.

As I mused, forgetful of time, a transient gale of perfume brushed across me, and turning my head to catch its sweetness, I started at sight of some violets which had been planted on the bank behind where I sat, by the hand of her who now absorbed my thoughts, and which lifted their bright blue petals above the grass that surrounded them. I cannot express the effect of this accidental circumstance. I felt as if my mother's spirit had passed me in the breeze.

The violet was her most appropriate symbol—cheerful as spring, and diffusing fragrance as she did happiness; the fleeting charm was like a visit from her, and I cherished an idea so welcome to my heart with superstitious veneration. I gathered all that I could find of these precious little flowers, and tearing myself from the scene, hastened by a cross-road over the moor, towards a hamlet in which Norah's letter informed me that she had taken up her abode.

How unaccountably capricious are the workings of the human heart! While rowing over the bay I refrained from asking any questions respecting Glendruid, lest sudden disgust at hearing that it was inhabited, might drive me back without landing. Now that I had been relieved from this apprehension, and had wandered unseen through every part of that once loved spot which I thought I could not endure to find occupied by strangers, my heart swelled with a far different emotion.

"What," said I, "is this the end of every sublunary tie, of every local endearment? Must all mortal excellence be thus forgotten, and the

place where it so lately flourished become a howling wilderness? Was there no friendly hand to preserve the memory of virtue, and prevent the habitation where it grew from falling into decay, and annihilation?" Such was the oppression which these thoughts occasioned, that, unable to continue walking, I threw myself, quite exhausted, on a tuft of heath; and, in the loneliness of a mountain waste, gave vent to a burst of agony, which the fear of witnesses had hitherto restrained.

My mind overcome by feelings too powerful to be longer resisted, I did not perceive the approach of some sheep till they passed close by my feet; rising hastily, I perceived that they were driven by a man who took off his hat in token of respect, not without apparent surprise at finding a stranger in such a situation. Roused from my reverie, I inquired of the young peasant, who had disturbed it, if he could direct me to Norah Kelly's.

"It is I that can do that, plase your honor," answered the young man; "and 'tis I that have a good right to know where she lives. If it

wasn't making too bould entirely wid your honor, I'd be afther asken if you'd be plased to let me know your commands for her."

I told my guide to direct me to Norah's dwelling, and that I had news for her which I hoped would be welcome.

"God bless you, Sir. I hope that your news is of Misther Albert, for I think, now that I am safe and sound, my poor mother thinks worse of him than of any thing in the living world."

"Good Heavens," exclaimed I, "is it possible that I see Tim Kelly?"

"I am no other, Sir, than the very same," answered the poor fellow; "and may you never know grief or sorrow if you are the one to bring comfort to her that's desolate in the wild desert of the mountains, for sure 'tis a good heart would take that trouble."

I gazed on Tim as if he had come from another world; and though his appearance was much altered, as well as improved, I was soon enabled to trace the lineaments which had once been familiar, when the bare-footed boy, now grown to man's estate, used to accompany me

with dog and gun in my shooting excursions; I would have concealed my name till we reached Norah's cabin; but it could not be, and never was meeting more cordial and affectionate than ours; let not the artificial sons and daughters of fashion spurn at the avowal, if I confess that the big heart sought relief at the eye.

Poor Tim and I wept in concert, but anxiety on the son's part to impart glad tidings to this aged parent, soon set him in motion, and forgetful of his sheep, which he left to browze at random, off he flew like an arrow; I had some difficulty in overtaking, and prevailing with him to wait for me. At last I impressed on his mind my dislike at being ushered into the hamlet like a dancing bear, and at length succeeded in moderating his transports. On reaching Norah's door we found her sitting at the outside, watching Tim's return, and knitting a pair of lamb's wool stockings for her darling. To avoid a scene which would have assembled a crowd about us, I made Tim take his mother by the arm, and draw her inside the house before I appeared in her presence.

"Holy Mary," exclaimed the old woman, "is this my child?—my young masther I main, I beg his pardin. Oh Cuishla machree," as she dropped on her knees, "now I'm ready sure enough; and ef tis the Lord's will and pleasure only to laive me see Kate Carroll married to Tim, I wouldn't keer how soon I'd be under the green sod."

The eloquence of untutored love now poured its full tide with impetuosity not to be restrained, and who that has a heart would abridge its honest flow? I sat down by the turf fire, and in one short half hour we wove such a web of happiness to come, as would have furnished materials in polished life for a three-volume tissue of knotty hopes and fears, to bring to conclusion. To my broad and simple queries, I received as broad and simple answers. Tim loved Katie passing well, and Katie she loved Timsey. John Fergusson the mason, was to be set to work on the following day, to construct a comfortable cottage on the platform, half way down the cliff. The fireplace was to be exactly on the self-same spot where Norah had kindled the beacon blaze for twenty years. Tom Gale's hooker, now at an-

chor close to shore, with a bush at her mast-head to denote that she was for sale, was immediately to pass into the possession of Tim Kelly; and a check for a hundred pounds, with one stroke of a pen made Kate Carroll the *Begum* of the country, and enabled her to reward a true lover. What exquisite happiness may be imparted and enjoyed for the small sum of five hundred pounds! A sum lost or won every day on the turn of a card, lavished on a wager, or spent upon a useless trinket!

Joy was full to the brim in the cabin of poor Norah, with whom I left a trifle, that she might taste in her turn the bliss of making others happy; and bidding adieu to my humble friends hurried into the road which brought me to the vicarage of Mr. Stockdale.

Here another greeting of the tenderest kind awaited me. The excellent man was quite overcome by my sudden appearance, and insisted with such warmth on detaining me till the next day, that I could not refuse; so despatching a messenger to order my boat for the following morning, I yielded to the entreaties of my host.

Our frugal, yet hospitable repast was soon concluded, and drawing our chairs close to the blazing hearth, we interchanged a history of the years which had elapsed since our last meeting. I gave a rapid sketch of the most remarkable circumstances which had befallen me, and the revolution which they had effected in my character and opinions.

Deep attention hung upon my tale, but nothing so much impressed the heart of my auditor as an assurance that I was no longer a sceptic in matters of religion. The loaves and fishes, so commonly attractive to mankind, had no charm for Mr. Stockdale, whose pure spirit was not excited by visions of worldly aggrandisement. In answer to the question, "What will you let me do for you?" he replied, "You have made me happy, and I want no more. It was a saying of Marcus Antoninus, that "the best thing for a man is that which God sends him," and so I find it. I have lived here a long time, and my poor people, after suffering themselves to be hurried away in the whirlpool, are returning to their senses. I love them, and believe that they

love me. I have enough for every honest purpose, and desire to live and die in these wilds to which I am accustomed. Send me whatever bounty you wish to distribute amongst your unfortunate countrymen, and this is all that you shall do for me."

Noble, disinterested being! Yet this was a man whom I had held up to the ridicule of all my associates in early life! I gained all the information which I sought relating to the companions of former days from Mr. Stockdale. Mr. Lovett, he told me, had died neither beloved nor respected; and was followed to the grave by the execrations of those who, deluded by false promises, had been abandoned in the hour of adversity. Mrs. Lovett, neglected by her children, survived her husband for a short time, only to witness the misfortunes of her family completed. Her sons had come to an untimely end; and of three daughters, the eldest had reduced her theories to practice, and in doing so, reduced herself to the lowest state of female degradation; the second, who possessed considerable beauty, went upon the stage; and the youngest of this ill-

starred house, terrified by the fate of her brothers and sisters, and the annihilation of their property; daily witnessing too the humiliating condition to which anxiety to *forget*, by means of laudanum and brandy, those sorrows which she could not avert, had brought her mother, terminated her miserable existence by drowning herself. Tying a handkerchief upon the branch of a great willow tree which overhangs the river running through Painesville, the hapless girl plunged into the stream to rise no more. Her body was discovered by means of the signal which she left upon the scene of her suicide, and on her table was found a paper addressed to her mother, containing the following words, of which Mr. Stockdale gave me a copy:

"The sole survivor of my race, who has not *yet* brought confusion on your devoted head, I am going to finish the tragedy, and remove myself from a world in which I have no friend. If Mr. Wildman be right, I am wrong, and may expect a dreadful doom; but who has revealed those mysteries which lie beyond human ken, to Mr. Wildman? My hope and belief

are, that as my father always told us, the grave is the end of mortal disquietude. And yet, though I do not believe that methodist whom I have named, he sent daggers to my soul. I heard him preach in the fields, and I wish that you my mother would go and listen to him. *You* might find comfort in his words, though I am beyond the reach of consolation. He talks of mercy and a world to come, and sets my brain on fire with his doctrine. Why did I not hear of these things in the days of innocent childhood, while the heart is open to happy impressions, and the spirit receives with gladness whatever food is imparted to its eager curiosity? I had a heart and could have loved my God, had I been taught to know him. If, as my father used to assert, there is no judgment, no hereafter to be hoped for or feared, why was his own death such a scene of agony? Why did he send for every priest who would attend his summons, and quitting the communion in which he was nominally educated, swallow a wafer to entitle himself to an absolution from the church of Rome, which he knew was not to be obtained

from Mr. Stockdale? I am harassed by these thoughts. If Mr. Wildman were here, I might be saved perhaps from the deed which I am going to commit, but he is gone to alarm sinners like me, in another part of the country, and when he returns I shall be no more. Go, mother, and hear him. Do not be afraid. He will cut you to the quick, but it is like the surgeon who wounds to save. Hear him, oh hear him! There may be what he calls balm in Gilead, and you may taste it though there is none for me. I must not linger; farewell, farewell, my mother! I had a heart once, but it is broken. She who loved the birds and flowers, *could* have loved God and you!

"MARY LOVETT."

I shuddered as I read. "Gracious heaven," I exclaimed, "are these the practical fruits of infidelity, and did the sun shine upon the fields of him, did the earth yield her increase to him, who told his children that the lamps of day and night were suspended in the firmament by chance; and that the fertilizing dews which filled his garners, were self-distilled?

"Aye," answered Mr. Stockdale, "these men, ungrateful for the blessings they enjoy, consume without thankfulness, and 'waxing fat,' kick like Jeshurah."

Of the Talbots I learned that they had been forced to fly, and Mr. Stockdale could only tell me of that family, that they were forgotten, except by those who were the victims of their dishonesty. One of the sons was suspected of forgery, and absconded just in time to save himself from the gallows; and it was certain that the father had secretly carried off a large sum of money which had been deposited with him in bank by the poor people, who were afraid of being robbed by the lawless banditti that ravaged the country in quest of plunder, or exacted tribute under a variety of false pretences.

Sickened by the accounts which I received of those who had been the companions of my boyish days, I turned for comfort to the view of a virtuous life, and beheld in the worthy pastor, under whose roof I heard these tales of woe, a pattern of active charity and benevolence, which presented a happy reverse of the pictures which

he had drawn. In him the wicked found a monitor, the needy a benefactor, the sick a physician, and all his parishioners their best counsellor and friend. Beloved, revered, no difference of creed withheld his bounty, or prevented an appeal to his justice. When I expressed wonder and admiration at the extent of good which, even in my short visit, I could perceive that he accomplished, he cut short my eulogium with authority:

"Beware, my young friend, of flattering a poor old man; I must not hear another word of this. I have much to remember with grief, and all that the longest life could enable me to perform, would still leave me an unprofitable servant. I undertook my office, as many unthinking men of my time were wont to do, without any serious regard to the nature of those duties which it prescribed. Protected by a powerful establishment, it is too much the character of frail man to become supine, and sleep upon his post. I had subscribed to the thirty-nine articles; and passed a clumsy examination, I knew not how. The Church was to be my *livelihood*,

my *profession.* I entered upon it totally unprovided with means for defending my faith against the attacks which were soon to be levelled unsparingly against the Christian religion by such assailants as yourself. Young, daring, and presumptuous, who substitute audacity for courage, perseverance for truth, and dogmatism for argument, I missed many opportunities of doing my master's work, and often shrunk from the task of approving his doctrines in the eyes of men whose hollow reasoning would have been easily overturned. I can never forgive myself for the indolence of my early course."

The parsonage clock struck one ere my valuable friend and I shook hands and retired to rest. The first streak of light in the east found my little skiff at the strand; and as I slipped away unperceived, I could not help repeating from Bacon,

" It is Heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth."

The benediction which I received at parting

from Mr. Stockdale, *must*, I felt, carry a blessing with it; and I hurried to my boat, in which I pushed off into the bay from the cave of Albinia!

How like a horrible dream did the events of that stormy and terrible night, which buried her in the fathomless ocean, now appear as they rose upon memory, when quitting the scene of them to return no more.

CHAPTER XXI.

Reader, if you dislike the act of posting along a mail coach road as much as I do, you will not regret to be spared the dirt and dust, the ups and downs, bad horses, and worse inns, which lay in my way to the Irish metropolis, from whence I soon reached London.

Here a new world opened on my view, and if Paris had not anticipated the splendor of our English capital, my senses would have been completely dazzled. The winter's campaign of fashion just commenced as I reached Clonmore-house, and I gave myself to its fascinations with all the buoyancy of prosperous youth. My plan of purchasing an estate in my own country was not relinquished, but postponed. I had only resolved, that I would not reside near Glendruid. Maria had indeed laid a scheme which was at

variance with mine. She decreed that I was to become possessor of Claremont, in the near neighbourhood of Elwood Park, then fall in love, and bring my drama to its fifth act by a marriage with my dulcinea.

Though not disposed to be thus besieged in regular train, I was well inclined to see my sisters merry, and promote their amusement by seeming to enter into all their devices. I was to be a new edition of *l'Ingénu* fresh from the lake of Huron. Much laughing at my expense was anticipated in my transplantation from a counting-house in Quebec to Clonmore-house, the most brilliant mansion of the most brilliant city in the empire. I laughed heartily too, but the event proved more favourable to me than I expected.

After all, though I am not vain enough to apply the observation in all its force to myself, when gentle birth has secured the nature of first impressions, when noble principles and delicate sentiments are familiar to our youthful minds, beneath the paternal roof, a very little tact in adopting readily the manners of the world, is

necessary to make a very presentable sort of person. Surface is easily added. Any varnish will lie on a good grain, while a rough and porous foundation will soak up all that can be lavished on the exterior, without exhibiting the slightest polish. I made my *debut* under a lucky star, and travelled through the whole circuit of a London winter in what was called the first society; and so it was, were rank and wealth the best criterion by which to judge of its merits.

I was amused but not interested. I was courted, cultivated, assailed, by those who would have cast me from them with disdain, if the rumour of my fortune had not secured a very different feeling. The desire to monopolize my property made people wonderfully good-natured in overlooking the scandal of having been a merchant; and till it was discovered that I was leaving town without any *affaire du cœur* on my hands, I never heard a word in the least disparaging to my pretensions. The world is the most heartless of all created things. I had heard myself inquired about, in every gradation of sound, from the half whisper up to the confident *haute voix* of

fashionable supremacy. I was asked where I had been, and was often diverted by the contrivances made use of to arrive at the fact of how my income was derived, whether lands or funds, what was its amount, whether involved or free from debt, and many other particulars, which, if they were directed on my account, and would not have been equally applicable to any one possessed of my reputed riches, it would argue the most unpardonable vanity to repeat.

The truth, however, is too obvious to render any reserve upon the subject at all requisite to propriety; and I may therefore be permitted in a passing way to put the unwary on their guard, while I contribute my testimony to abate the self-esteem of others by declaring my firm assurance that there is scarcely any configuration of person, or compound of mind and manners, which will not succeed, provided always that all defects whether of mind or body be double gilt.

There are few romancers now, even among the young, and certainly it would be surprising if there were, such prudent pains are taken by parental solicitude to instil a discreet attention

to rank and fortune into their minds. If I had ever adopted the saucy motto of "ask and have," I should not have encouraged any personal vanity by doing so. Had there been no uncle Anthony and Lord Clonmore, Albert Fitzmaurice's individual merits would not have done much for him in the *beau monde*. As things were, however, I had no cause to complain, but having just penetration enough to perceive that I was indebted for my reception to the above-mentioned accidents, I took the world with perfect indifference, and rolled my tub, like Diogenes at Corinth, as carelessly and agreeably as if I were a practised actor.

I saw many strange things during the whirl of a season's gaiety at the west end. Many heartless marriages which threatened, and fulfilled the threat, of divorce. Some breaches of faith reckless as dishonorable. Much flirtation, much folly; but glitter, pomp, pride, and circumstance; which still kept the wheel in motion, and produced a corresponding excitement of the animal spirits, which prevented reflection from having full scope, till the second of June, about

which period all well-bred people were leaving town. When that day arrives, after a London winter, what extraordinary histories of disappointed hopes, baffled speculations, and ruined fortunes might be annually collected, were Asmodeus at hand to take a peep into the interior of each family as the general movement commences!

But this was only with me a subject for moralizing; I had no share in its reality. Happy in the midst of domestic affection which had suffered no diminution since its promotion to a higher sphere, I found my path strewed with flowers, while I saw the thorns at such a distance that they did not hurt me.

As all things come to an end, so did our London winter, and the day was fixed for setting out to Elwood. On the evening preceding our departure, I was sitting near Maria on a sofa, when she suddenly turned round, and said, "Well, Albert, after all my exertions to introduce you, and all my designs, that you should lose your heart in order to find a wife, here you are, so provokingly cool and unperturbed, that

I do believe you are are quitting this region of attraction without having once been in danger, though I have shewn you all that was most captivating in beauty, fashion, and accomplishments."

I felt a rising sigh as the image of Miss Bouverie glanced across my mind, when Maria talked of perfections so far inferior (if I may be allowed to speak of comparison in that which, in a rigid interpretation excludes degrees,) to those which rested on my memory; but as such thoughts were kept to myself, I replied, "Why should you be cruel enough to regret that I have passed uninjured through the fiery furnace which you prepared to destroy me? Is it not fortunate for me to have escaped? Had I been scorched, who amongst all your brilliant circle would have condescended to pour balsam on my wounds? No, my dearest countess, your schemes will never prosper. If I ever meet with a partner, it must be in some gentle fair one of my native land, who will find happiness and home synonymous terms, and not cast longing lingering looks behind on such a world as

this. I could not endure that my wife should enjoy nothing but the "pleasures of memory." I must return to my green island, and should some soft hearted daughter of Innisfail take compassion on my solitude, I shall notify the event; if not, Geraldine must divide herself between you and me, till she is snatched from us both by some fortunate rival of our claims."

"Which will probably never be," said Geraldine, who blushed violently, and added, "I never deceive myself by laying to my heart the flattering unction of that homage which is not paid to *me*, but to the circumstances which surround me. I am a little Irish pebble, set in Clonmore-house, and encircled by diamonds. Thus adorned, I am adopted by the great, for the time being; but take me out of my fine setting, and you will soon find that I am cast away, and obliged to take refuge in some case of dust-covered minerals."

"Well," said I, "we shall all, I fancy, be more in our element at Elwood, the cool shades of which will refresh our spirits, and put us in

good humour, but you have never described your neighbours to me."

"Some of them you have seen in town," answered Maria; "who, like ourselves, are breaking up their encampment to change quarters. For the rest, I cannot find time now to draw pictures. You will soon judge for yourself."

While my sisters and I were talking this *badinage*, Lord Clonmore entered the room with a letter open in his hand. It was from Mrs. Reynolds, who reported a serious attack of illness which had alarmed her for the life of her husband. He was recovering slowly, but the physicians had decided that he was to leave home immediately, and cease altogether from being a man of business.

"Our means," added Mrs. Reynolds, "are sufficient for perfect independence, and we shall set out directly for Madeira. We have determined on selling Craigallan, which to me is a perfect garden of Eden; but what are woods, lakes, or bowers, to compare with the life of my beloved husband? If I am blessed by his restoration, shall I not find another Craigallan

wherever I go? To get rid of all care must be our first object. In some of your lordship's late letters, you mention Albert's desire to purchase land in Ireland. If he thinks of residing in his own country, this sweet place may tempt him. You know, and can describe it; and should you agree with me in opinion that it may suit our young friend, I advise him to come over as soon as possible."

When Lord Clonmore had finished reading this paragraph, the trio with one voice approved the suggestion which it contained; and in five minutes it was arranged that, instead of accompanying the party to Elwood, I should first go to Ireland, and arrange the purchase of Craigallan.

"I could not bear to see you an absentee," said Geraldine; "and when Maria has pressed your residing in England, I never was able to unite in her wishes, naturally as they arose in her heart. My Albert must have a 'local habitation and a name' in the land which gave him birth; and if any thing can lessen the sorrow with which I contemplate the departure of my

dear friends from that paradise of their own creation, it is the certainty that it is to belong henceforward to my brother."

It was time to say adieu, and we parted to retire to our respective bed-chambers. When I reached mine, I found my mind so full of castle-building that I could not rest. The moon shone brightly upon the acacias under my window, and I got up to indulge as I gazed upon their silvered foliage a thousand brightly enthusiastic schemes for the future. As I sat in my window, I heard Geraldine's softly opened, and perceiving that she had also busy thoughts which "murdered sleep," I stole to her dressing-room, where we passed the night in much discourse. There was something at all times pensive and moralizing about Geraldine's character, but particularly since she had been involved in a sort of life which she greatly disliked. "Nothing," said she, "could repay me for the sacrifice of inclination to which I submit, but Maria's society, and Elwood in prospect. The gay world will never interest me, and I long for scenes and employ-

ments more congenial than I can taste in London, where smiles are often a court dress which covers sad hearts."

"But how will you leave Lady Susan Lambert and Miss Mildmay, with whom you seem so much *lié?*"

"I long to leave both," answered Geraldine, "though from different causes. Lady Susan is a sweet girl, and I cannot bear to think of her destiny. She has, alas! yielded to the persuasions of her mother, who is one of the most worldly-minded beings in creation, and is going to marry a man whom she dislikes and despises, driven like a victim to the altar. I pity, but blame her for submission to arguments against which her whole heart revolts, but an immense fortune is the bait, and her mother is victorious. Poor Lady Susan is 'more sinned against than sinning.' Not so Miss Mildmay, who of her own free good will is going to desert the high-minded and amiable Colonel Freshfort, to whom she was actually engaged, lured by the attractions of a title. Old Sir Stephen Marchmount is the person to whom she makes the heartless transfer

of her hand. I am not, you see, so much to blame, in feeling impatient to be gone."

As part of the journey which we were all to travel lay along the same road, Geraldine proposed accompanying me in my curricle, as long as the party kept together. Within a mile of the stage at which we were to part, one of the horses lost a shoe, and we agreed to walk while the accident was repairing. Light and active as an antelope, Geraldine made a spring, when I offered her my assistance to get out of the carriage, and a letter dropped from her bosom on the ground. I stooped to pick it up.

"Oh never mind it, Albert, I will take it up myself," was uttered with such vehemence, that I turned round to look at the speaker, whose cheeks were dyed in scarlet. "*Do* give it to me," was repeated so emphatically, that I playfully detained my prize to torment its owner, and taking a complete view of the seal and superscription, found the former engraved with a Druid's head, and the latter written in a beautiful but unknown hand. "Oh ho! my sister,

here are secrets of which I am thought unworthy; I did not expect this from Geraldine."

"Indeed, indeed, you are mistaken; I have never deceived you; I have no secrets such as you imagine."

"Why then all this mystery? What makes you blush so violently, and wherefore such anxiety about your letter?"

Geraldine smiled, and entreated me not to question her any more. The letter, she said, was from a friend, to whose affairs it related, and as I found it vain to hope for her farther confidence, I ceased to plague her. Arriving at our appointed term, we said farewell, and I took the road to Penrhüdlyn, which was situated near that magnificent ruin which

"Frowns o'er Conway's foaming flood."

I had never visited my aunt Courtenay, and now, for the first time, admired that lovely region of the bards, immortalized by Gray. Gerald expected me, and as I approached the ferry, a little boat appeared in view. A white handkerchief hoisted on a staff, waved a signal which

I understood, and answered by quitting my carriage, which I left to go across in the usual manner, while I took the shortest path, and in a moment was seated at Gerald's side.

A few minutes more, and we were landed within sight of an exquisite cottage, to which we ascended from the river by a winding path which lay through a bank of the most luxuriant evergreens. An affecting meeting ensued, my aunt and I mutually tracing in each other's features, such similitude to a beloved object as wakened sorrowful remembrance.

Mr. and Mrs. Somers, with their infant, completed the group, and never did domestic love and harmony appear more perfect than in this little elysium.

The first use which Gerald made of wealth, was to confer independence on those he loved. His absent brother, and his sister Mrs. Somers, were now in possession of that "elegant sufficiency" beyond which the wants of man are all factitious or ideal. They had enough, through Gerald's generosity, for every rational purpose of enjoyment, and desired no more. This

affectionate son made Penrhüdlyn his mother's property by purchase, finding her attachment to the scene of happier days so strong, that she preferred her mountain hermitage to all that England could offer. Till now, my aunt had only rented the retreat in which I found her, and Gerald proposed a more spacious dwelling, near Elwood park.

"No," said she, "do not press me, my Gerald, to quit the still retirement which has witnessed the sad vicissitudes of my life, and in which I have been blest by the giver of all good with that resignation to his will, which supports me under every trial. My child, remember that I am growing old, and though health may be mercifully granted for a season, it is time to draw the curtain upon what is called *the world*. I have never lived in fashion's way, and should make a foolish figure now amongst her votaries. My opinions are fixed, my tastes are of another day, and were I to mingle in society, I must either submit to be thrown aside as lumber, or, seeking for popularity, cease to respect myself. Let me then remain undisturbed in my wholesome seclusion. You

shall go out; such absence as may 'urge sweet return,' will heighten your enjoyment of home, and my delight at welcoming my Gerald when he seeks his mother's abode."

Gerald acquiesced in the decision of that judgment, which he had never failed to respect, and made no farther effort to alter its decree.

Having passed a few happy days at Penrhüdlyn, and prevailed on Gerald to accompany me to Ireland, we set out, with a promise on my part, of restoring my friend to his Welsh home, whenever Mordaunt's arrival was announced.

When one considers the short distance between Dublin and Holyhead, and the constant intercourse, it is astonishing how such a difference should exist, as strikes on the eye on landing at either from the other. Our packet approached the shore, which was crowded as though we had just arrived from the Sandwich Isles. The people who thronged to the shore looked like bundles of rags, called by the people in North Wales *jillyhooters*, which are set up in the corn fields to frighten the crows. A din of voices, wild and untutored as the whoop of a

New Zealander, assailed us with deafening shout, and denied all hope of making our wishes known, but to be angry was as impossible as to be heard, such is the inimitable force of every Milesian countenance, and such the irresistible humour which enlivens the poorest Irish looby.

In the midst of such chaotic confusion as seemed to defy every attempt to disembark, we found ourselves at last on *terra firma*. Gerald supposed that we must have landed in the crisis of a general rising, but I was better acquainted with the ways of my countrymen; so marched up to a clown, who was the stentor of the party, and taking him by the sleeve, if a floating pennant of drab cloth, or what had once been such, deserved the name of sleeve, remonstrated on the intolerable uproar, and desired him to make less noise.

With admirable drollery of countenance, he looked first at me, and then grasping the arm of a wretched blind beggar, who stood with extended hand, and mute as a statue, while he silently implored alms of the passengers, shook him heartily, bawling out louder than ever,

"Och, an plase your honor, that's thrue fur you. Terry Flanigan, dont you heer what the gintleman does be afthur sayen, that you'd fairly bother a rookery, and so you would, with the clather you're maken. Why wouldn't you be aisy, man?"

Blind Terry seemed perfectly to comprehend the wit of the thing, and with a broad grin, and his poor dark eye-balls directed to the clouds, made a rolling movement of his shoulders; a common mode of scratching which the lowest order of Irish peasants employ, which relieves by friction of the skin against their garments.

I burst out laughing, and the humourist who had then gained his end, managed us as he pleased. The tide not answering for taking us to the Pigeon-house, we were landed at Dunleary; where the only vehicle which we could procure to take us to Dublin was a miserable rattle-trap called a jingle, in so crazy a condition that it appeared absurd to attempt such a mode of conveyance, but it was Hobson's choice, and after driving a great enormous nail through the end of the axletree, by way of linch-pin,

off we set, leaving the servants to follow with our luggage, when the revenue sharks were satisfied. To my amazement we actually went forward, though not without some demur on the part of our luckless steed, which was a raw boned rosinante, of such diminutive size that the great tatterdemalion already described, who was our charioteer, seemed fitter to bear his burden, than to be borne by the poor beast.

"Your horse is uneasy; I fear that he is galled," said I to our *Jehu.*

"Och, not a taste, plase your honor; 'tis nauthen in life but sperrit that ails him; and bad manners to him but I'll be bail 'tis I that will smack you into College Green in no time at all. There isn't a bit o' red leather on his carkiss as big as the black o' yer nail, plase your honor;" and so saying, he chucked the rein, half made of rope, and brandishing a dismantled whip, happily incapable of inflicting much pain, we flourished away, while the tattered vestments of Flurry Walsh, fluttered in the breeze like a Dyer's sign-post. When we had proceeded about a mile, I took it into my head

that our driver had missed the way, and desiring him to stop, I called to a group of men who were trotting on foot by the road side, the skirts of their coats turned up underneath into a hump on the back of each, while shoes and stockings slung over the end of a stick, dangled across the shoulders, "My lads," said I, "where are you going; is it to Dublin? I think that we are in the wrong line."

"Plaise your honor, if 'tis from Sai you are, and for Dublun, you're right enough, and goen straight for it as sure as the Harth money. 'Tis to Stilorgan we're goen, keeperen; the *contrary* way from you, plase your honor, and dry work it is."

Time was precious; I threw a shilling to the bare-legged band, and as we drove on begged Flurry to explain the nature of an employment entirely new to me. On inquiry I made out that "keepering" means not only assisting in making a distraint for rent, but *keeping*, or taking care of the distress afterwards.

"Och, then, your honor didn't think that I'd be afther knowen the way, but if the lights were clane put out o' my head, see how I'd dhrive

you fair and aisy in the dark all as one, and let any other man have the law o' me half a mile —"

"My good Flurry," answered I, "I do not doubt your powers when sober, but you have taken a glass extraordinary to day, and then a man may make a mistake, you know."

"Faiks, and to be sure he may; your honor spaiks sinsible enough, and 'twas only last Lady day, be the same token that I gót a capsize myself, clane over the cliff, be raison I was a little hearty; but barr'en a dhram, and a thrifle of two pots o' porther, I didn't wet my lips to day; and I'm sartain there's not a living sign o' liquir on me good or bad, any more than on them that's unborn, saven your favor."

We had not gone much farther, when passing a small burying-ground, I perceived in a field close adjoining, a circle of women, who with frantic gestures were howling the funeral cry. As these mourners, technically called *Keeners*, were collected round something which lay upon the ground, I concluded it to be a dead body, and feared that some accident had happened.

Even Flurry thought appearances sufficient to justify a pause, and throwing the bridle or rein, which was knotted in half a dozen different places to keep it together, over to me, he said with a mixture of gravity and merriment, peculiarly Hibernian, "Ef your honor will be plased jist to hould this, a feer the hoss would be for runnen away."

"Why, you blockhead," said I, "do you think that we are fools? Don't you know as well as I do that the poor brute would never stir from one year's end to the other, if you left him without bit or bridle to the world's end. You seem to fancy, Flurry, that we have lost our senses.

"Troth, and 'tis myself would be afther losing 'em before I'd think that, your honor. I'd be a fool in *airnest* then. I'll engage all you said is as thrue as the Pope o' Room, but in the main time, though I say it that shouldn't say it, be raison the baist is me own, he's as good cattle as you'd see from Dunlary to Merrion Square; and be the same token he does be so frisky when I'm for tackling of him, that the

name I has fur him is Capering Casey, becase too I swapped him with one Mick Casey the tailor, who lives down in the bog fornent the Bay, plase your honor."

Flurry now drew up by the side of a ditch, and scrambling through a gap, off he flew, his rags flapping in the wind like the signals of a telegraph.

He presently reached the spot where the outlandish lament was going forward. The figures who were performing this national wail, reminded me of the paintings which I had seen of the distracted Britons rushing from the coast before Agricola. Flurry's curiosity was soon satisfied. A man, who stood as sentinel, prevented him from going up near enough to the female band to disturb the rites in which they were engaged, and accompanying our charioteer back to the jingle in which we were patiently waiting Flurry's return, enacted the part of Coryphæus, and in quality of spokesman informed us that the women were keening the clothes of Thady Murphy, who was going to "larn botany."

This was all Algebra to us, but when rendered into plain English meant that a person convicted of sheep stealing had been sentenced to transportation for life, and having been just put into the convict's costume his own clothes were given to his family, who were now celebrating the same obsequies over these exuviæ which the body would have experienced, had Thady Murphy departed this life instead of his native country.

There are so many beautiful specimens of the Caöne or Irish death song extant, that I shall not efface the memory of more pathetic strains, by translating the dirge which was howled upon the present occasion. Much pleased with our commencing adventures, Gerald and I resolved on making a collection of Hibernian reminiscences, and were again dashing away towards the capital, when Flurry stopped our vehicle with such a sudden check that I was near being thrown into the middle of the road. Our way was intercepted it appeared by what turned out to be a man lying at full length just under the horse's feet.

"What is this—who have we here?"

"Och, plase your honor, I know him very well, and why would'nt I? He's Paddy Hagarty that's overtaken with a sup. Arrah! what is it you're doen there, Pat?" said Flurry.

"I dinno what I'm doen. Take me up, in the name of St. Phadhrig," answered the man.

"Where are you comen frum now?" rejoined Flurry.

"Frum the Cat and Bagpipes aroon; take me up, and I'll tell ye."

"He's a very daicent boy," said Flurry, "ef your honors is for taken him in."

"We will certainly do no such thing," said I; "we are not, Mr. Walsh, so fond of drunken company."

"Small blame for that to the likes o' ye. Never o' one of sich quality as your honor would covet to be setting opposit to any dhrunken baist," replied our charioteer.

"We must not leave him here, however," answered I.

"I said so, all along," replied Flurry; "your honors have too much nather to be laiving a crischin man in the road, fur a coach and six

may be, for all we would know, to be goen straight over his carkiss."

A truckle, on which a fat pig was laid, going to market, came up at this moment, and, with some difficulty, we lifted the votary of Bacchus from his mud bath, and placed him in a recumbent posture side by side with the congenial companion already in possession of the car.

"What shall I give you," said I, "for taking this man safe, either to the next public house or his own?"

"A hog, plase your honor," answered the carman.

Gerald and I laughed at the coincidence, and Flurry, seizing directly on the equivoque, cried out,

"Och, your honor, sure burds of a feadther flock togedther. 'Tis a good price, howsomever, for public life is as thick as hops now frum this in to Baggit-street."

On raising the drunken man we found him more sleepy than intoxicated, the fumes of his potation having nearly evaporated, and his account of himself was given in the truest style.

" Plasc your honor, Corney, that's Cornalius, that's my brother be the father's side, and I were wetten our hearts at the Cat and Bagpipes, and staid there with Jem Flaherty my gossup too long entirely, so we got the coachman of the Dunlary Fly to give us a lift. Why then 'twas much, but Corney, that's Cornalius, an I we bodthe feil asleep, and ef we did, I was hized off wid one joult, and sure the villain never cried stop nor stay, though I screeched tell I was tired afther him, and I thinks worse o' poor Corney, for 'tis he'll be like buck or bear in a reg'lar aginny when he'll wake up, and be afther missen me."

Well, we actually arrived at the canal-bridge, and thinking it as well to walk into Dawson-street, as drive in Flurry's jingle, we alighted, and curiosity prompting me to examine the horse's neck, I lifted the collar, if collar it could be called, and shewing the dismal sight which it concealed to our driver, vented my indignation on his hypocrisy.

" What a shameless liar you are! You said

that your horse had not a scratch all over his body."

"Ah then, masther, why would I be fretten ye with telling the trudth? Why would'nt he be stripped that never stops night or day, and the pelting rain we had isterday too?—let alone that his flesh is soft. Only for that I'd get tin pound any day fur him as aisy as blackberries; but he dont mind it, your honor, he's so used to it, for 'tis out of him I mintains fadther and modther; and I'll get a sougawn when I'm back at Dunlary, and put it between him and the ledther, with a bit of a rabbit skin over it, that'il be like a fedther bed to him."

We gave Flurry a lecture on cruelty, which I fear he remembered only till he heard the last of it; and adding half a crown to his fare for the amusement which he had furnished us, bid good bye to this merry savage, who, spitting on his money for sake of handsel, and then cramming the silver into a piece of old stocking, for which he fumbled in the deep profound of a ragged breeches pocket, rattled off with his empty jingle,

making the welkin ring with our praises for "ra-al gentlemen as ever broke bread, or stepped in leather shoe."

We found Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds in town, and I felt happy in making the acquaintance of these excellent persons. Integrity and strong sense were marked on every feature of the former, and the same attributes in softer guise distinguished his amiable partner. They were people of sound and liberal education, fond of literature, discriminating in their view of men and books, and divested of affectation. Under their tuition I became acquainted with the gradations of society, and enabled to detect the weakness which so often subjects my countrymen to ridicule, when, forgetful of the place which Providence has assigned them, they puff and blow, like the frog in the fable, to imitate the ox, whose dimensions they can never reach. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds never flattered, but pointed out to me with admirable perspicuity, the shoals on which I might be liable to founder, and before I took possession of Craigallan I was made familiar with the *carte du pays.*

CHAPTER XXII.



I WAS presented at the castle, and wondered at the motley group which I saw there. Such a fortune as mine was nothing extraordinary in the ocean of British wealth; but in the double refracting crystal of the Emerald Isle it was magnified to such a degree, that wherever Gerald and I appeared, a *buz* proclaimed our approach. A fortnight glided away most agreeably, speeded by politeness, gaiety, and good cheer. The *mixture* of Irish society is often laughable, resulting from the united influence of quick minds, with the vanity of *never being behind;* but examples cannot be found in any part of the globe to exceed the *individual* specimens which may be selected from the gifted sons and daugh-

ters of green Erin, when they have courage to seem what they are, and do not fall into the mistake of copyism.

But I must proceed to Craigallan, whither my good friends determined to accompany us, kindly desirous of investing me themselves in my new property before they went abroad. As Mr. Reynolds was an invalid, we put him in the advance, that he might travel slowly, and arranged our journey so as to arrive at its end together.

Along the entire way I found a never-failing fund of entertainment in observing and entering into the humour of the different lower classes.

At one stage on the road there was great delay in furnishing post-horses, and our impatience was lulled by a thousand lying excuses. At length a lubberly fellow, acting as ostler, came slowly forward, leading one of our "cattle," as he called them, at such a snail's pace, that one would have imagined he was going to put it to a hearse; when a dapper little figure, who was to be our postilion, with a snub nose and cunning eye, called out, to our great diversion,

"Dannel Driskil, you're always distressen yourself. There's no hurry man—don't put yourself in a pasparation—take it *aisy*, me boy."

At another post, where we had again to wait, Gerald and I sat in the carriage, surrounded, as is customary, with idlers of all description, sizes, sex, and shape. I called to a fat, heavy-looking man, who stood near (supposing that he was to drive us), and desired that he would make haste; when a raggamuffin whom I had not seen till then, stepped forward with an inimitable gravity of air, and pushing the other back, said, "Oh no, plase your honour; this lad's too slight entirely. Sure sich a screed as he would be blowen away if he dhruve you, and we'ed never see fell or mark o' poor Pat Carthy again, wonced hee'd be set flyen. Plase your honour, 'tis I that am to dhrive you, and a good warrant I have." So saying he gave a good smack of his tongue against his cheek, and tumbling into the saddle, dashed off in a hand-gallop.

Arrived at Craigallan, great was my surprise at the exquisite beauty of my future home. Situated on the banks of a noble lake, there was

nothing wanting to the landscape which diversity of wood, water, and waving outline, could bestow.

The terms of sale were easily adjusted between the principals; but an Irish title is not to be treated unceremoniously, unless by those whose characteristic habit of *taking for granted*, is daily increasing the difficulties which attend every transfer of property in my native land. I should have done like my predecessors, and been satisfied with a broken chain; but Mr. Reynolds, more anxious for me than himself, determined that not a link should be defective; and accordingly lawyers and attornies, parchments and penance, were my portion. I prevailed, however, on my friends to leave me without waiting the issue of registry searches, and remove to a warm climate immediately. The day before their departure Mr. Reynolds put a paper into my hands, saying, "I have written this memorandum, because I am not able to speak without suffering. It will be useful to you; study it, and be assured that the counsel which it contains is derived from long expe-

rience and a true friend." When I retired at night, I read the following excellent advice:

"My dear Fitzmaurice. You are young, but happily for yourself and all who will depend upon you, you are not averse to borrow light from those who are able to impart it. You do not hold the idle notion, that a boy can pass from school and college into the judgment-seat of wisdom: and in the modesty of your decisions, and your deference to counsel, I place my strongest reliance for your future conduct. A long residence in Ireland as a man of business has given me opportunity to become acquainted with the character, genius, and wants of our people; and as I am going to surrender Craig-allan into your hands, I will give you a few hints to direct your course. This unhappy country labours under many discouragements and misfortunes; and it is the error of the times to seek in distant remedies for a cure, which can only be found at home.

"There is a lamentable dearth of public spirit amongst us. Patriotism is all evaporated in talk, and take it as a leading maxim, that our

democratie orators are invariably the worst land-lords in the community. Let nothing tempt you into fellowship with men of that description. I do not boast of inspiration, and am not presuming to enact the oracle, but no man of common sense, arrived at my time of life, can fail of drawing confidently certain conclusions from given premises, and remember I tell you that war, with all its sanguinary train, is not so much to be dreaded in our present circumstances as peace, which, by opening a free intercourse amongst the nations of Europe, will one day endeavour to sap and undermine British *principle,* which is stronger than all the armies which could be opposed against us. This may be thought the dream of a dotard, but you will probably live to confirm the truth of my prediction. The demoralization and infidelity of France have produced a subtil contagion, and wherever the pestilence of this malaria is permitted to spread, the effects, though retarded or accelerated by the nature of the constitutions on which they have to work, will be fatal in every instance sooner or later. Should the disease

become apparent, an alarm may be awakened, and a temporary re-action succeed, during the influence of which religion may become the fashion, and all may seem to go well for a season, but controversy will follow, and you will behold strange things. The sects will be at war, and at first a holy zeal will be roused, but a secret leaven will work its way, till party spirit finds itself strong enough to seize upon the powerful weapons which are brought forth and burnished anew, after the rust of ages had blunted the edge and concealed the temper. The arms of religion will then be used as *political* instruments; and under the false colours of liberality, multitudes will flock to the infidel standard.

"I will here draw a veil over my own sad prognostics. You are young, and I do not desire to dishearten, though I feel it my duty to forewarn you. With the mighty changes which are ordered by celestial wisdom and power we have nothing to do. *Our* business is with ourselves, our *own* conduct, our *own* example. The corner-stone of my advice to you is, beware of courting popular favour. The *mass* of men, I

am sorry to say, are very indifferent upon the subject of right and wrong, and flatter the people to attain their paltry selfish ends. One desires a seat in parliament; another wants some local advantage; a third hopes to have his rents more punctually paid; and therefore these men, with shameful disregard of their country's welfare, wink at every infraction of the laws, whether of God or man, which does not affect their own personal views of loss and gain.

"There is another class less culpable in the motive, but equally injurious in example, who, not possessing courage to resist the tide of popular authority, adopt the language of others without the smallest reflection, simply actuated by that tendency to *be in the fashion*, which is one of the greatest evils of Ireland. Others again, indolent by nature and overcome by fear, would concede every thing rather than endanger their repose, and the agitators know how to take advantage of their apprehensions. You have seen enough of the disturbers to shun *them* with the keenest distrust of their hollow professions, and I am not afraid of your yielding

through timidity; but it is natural to the youthful mind to love applause, and it often happens that those who are most diffident of themselves, are most easily intoxicated by praise.

"Beware of taking delight in the sound of your own voice. The Irish are an oratorical people, and like all who possess lively imaginations, peculiarly alive to the charms of eloquence. Avoid public dinners and *speeches.* Those who are most opposed in opinion to each other sometimes forget their differences under the influence of good cheer; and undecided characters are almost always entrapped when wine quickens the circulation, and the animal spirits begin to flow. You are a stranger—examine and weigh before you commit yourself. You are young—inform yourself before you determine; but when your opinions are built upon the sure foundation of fact, let nothing tempt you to relax their firm hold. Principle in morals is like gravitation in the physical world—an unseen but ever active force, which, under every variety of elemental strife, still holds the entire system in harmony divine.

"Be courageous. Though you stand alone, be *bold*, whatever pain you may encounter in the beginning, you will be repaid in the end. You will be respected. Men will know where to find you, and you will be resorted to, as a prop in time of need. Steadiness in right doing is never forgotten. Never suffer yourself to be deluded by the despicable substitution of *cant* for reality. You will hear of "general liberty," "march of mind," "enlightened age," "expanded knowledge," and many other sounding generalities which are but empty phantoms. The march of mind is true in a sense which is not meant by those who trumpet the assertion, that the understandings of men are only now beginning to be developed in all their splendour. Certain sciences *are* making progress; but take the word of a man much older than you are, that common sense is on the decline. We have few sound thinkers, and the number of such will decrease as the "tricking facilities" for communicating a superficial knowledge are daily augmenting.

"With respect to your tenants, be kind, but

strict. Prove to the people who depend upon you that you are in *earnest* in all that you say and do. Let your rents be moderate, but enforce regularity of payment. You will find the poorer orders of men in this country much more reasonable than you may imagine from the want of civilization in their general habits. Treat them leniently; with *clemency, but firmness.* You will find yourself beloved as well as revered. A *substantial* good is ever remembered, but the flimsy familiarities of an electioneering self-interest are speedily detected, and will not obtain that harvest which they are not calculated to produce. Be impartially just, and let *conduct* alone be the ground of preference towards individuals.

" In the choice of society your own taste will direct, but I pray you avoid *party* people. Act independently. Your principles may be fixed as a rock without the vulgar demonstration of bumper-toasts. When you are at a loss to decypher characters, inquire of me: I know them all, and will not mislead you. If you find yourself standing alone in the expression of an opi-

nion, do not allow yourself to be *talked down.* It is a common expedient to extinguish by noise what is unanswerable in argument. Let the enemy expend his ammunition; reserve yours till his is exhausted; then take your aim with calmness, and, when truth is on your side, never doubt success."

I treasured this excellent counsel, to which I have endeavoured to adhere. Our friends left us, while Gerald and I remained till my law business was finally concluded.

Time passes pleasantly as fleetly when the mind is full, and its energies are directed with a view to making those around us happy. I strove, however, imperfectly to follow in the steps of my predecessor; but "*who,*" I often thought, is to supply the gentle graciousness of Mrs. Reynolds? Where will the poor find those comforts and consolations, which money cannot of itself alone bestow, and to which the Irish peasant's heart is so sensitively alive? How or where this charm of kindness, which it is the pleasing province of female benevolence to impart, was to be met with, was a question

that sometimes occurred, but to which I was not prepared to reply.

The neighbourhood of Craigallan furnished nothing particularly interesting, though some were still to be found who, resisting the epidemic of the times, presented patterns of useful and rational character. As in other places, I found the female part of the community sometimes insipid, sometimes accomplished, and I must in justice add, sometimes excellent, with here and there a sprinkling of the ridiculous, which appeared new of its kind to Gerald and me, and of which I will give two sketches from my memorandum book.

Mr. and Mrs. Haughton and a numerous progeny resided at a place called Mount Pomona, at the distance of seven or eight miles from Craigallan. Thither we were invited, and while I live I shall never forget the day that we passed with these good people. We were ushered into a room as I imagined full of company, though, as it turned out, we were ourselves the only strangers in the group; but others were expected who were ultimately prevented from

coming by an unrelenting pour of rain, which damped the social energies of the country, or perhaps hailed as a welcome pretext for avoiding the martyrdom to which my friend and I were exposed by our punctuality. An interminable train of Miss Haughtons sat round the apartment, so that I felt as if transported into the centre of a boarding school; and the as interminable half hour before dinner was occupied by Mrs. Haughton in making us acquainted with the perfections of her family. She was not a manœuvrer; there was no design in this good woman's folly. It was an inordinate share of maternal affection, unaccompanied by knowledge of the world, or tact to restrain its overflow. She was now in her element, and scouts were sent in all directions to bring from their sundry repositories, etchings, drawings, cut paper filligree, embossings, embroidery, knittings and nettings, weavings and plattings, till the room looked like a pawn-broker's shop, while the delighted parent, by the extravagance of her own praise, spared us the necessity of paying compliment to trash which it would have

outraged common honesty to admire. I was desired to applaud a horrible daub, copied from a fine picture by Corregio, and I unluckily remarked that the fair sinner might perform great things with the aid of a good master.

"Good master!" echoed Mrs. Haughton, with ineffable disdain: "Permit me to observe, Mr. Fitzmaurice, that you do not shew yourself much skilled in the arts. *We* consider that Cordelia's genius would be cramped by the mannerism of any painter. Mr. Haughton, who has the finest taste that can possibly be, instructs our girls entirely, and certainly there is nothing to be met with like the talents of my family." Remembering that of valour the best part is discretion, I resolved to make no more mistakes, but it was easier to intend well, than to execute.

Dinner was announced, during which we had a history of housekeeping in all its branches, and though there was nothing extraordinary in either the cookery or materials, Mrs. Haughton assured us that no culinary ability in the whole country could compare with that exhibited at

Mount Pomona, and that in fact we had never tasted such viands as hers in our lives before. In a case of such intemperate self-esteem, to succumb at once is the best policy. My assent and consent were accordingly given, right hand and left, to every assumption of superiority.

After a repast, the fatigue of which still lives like an evergreen in my recollection, we adjourned in due season to the drawing-room, where preparations were in progress for a concert. One young lady, Miss Rosamond, was striking a key-note on the pianoforte with unruffled doggedness, while Miss Clementina tuned the harp, and Miss Penelope arranged the music stands. Violin, flute, and violoncello were added to the orchestra, the tuning, rasping, blowing, and screwing of which may be more adequately fancied than described. When all was ready, tea and coffee removed, servants discarded, and Mrs. Haughton, who beat time upon a tin warmer which she kept under her feet, had settled herself at a large round table in the centre of the room with her tambour frame, the crash began, and an overture was followed by

a most unmeaning ditty, consisting of half a score of verses, set to the most tiresome drone I ever heard. Gerald and I, taking example by Mrs. Haughton, made the walls resound with bravas and bravissimas, which were received with complacency, when I unfortunately inquired whether I might ask for one of Callcot's glees.

"*My* family, Mr. Fitzmaurice," replied Mrs. Haughton, "are not obliged to lavish their money at the shops for German and Italian, or English compositions. Mr. Haughton composes every thing at home. That beautiful air which you have just heard is his, and so are the words. Our poetry, I assure you, is quite equal to our music and painting. There is not any thing, in fact, for which we are indebted to foreign aid. My love," said she, addressing her husband, "when you have done playing, you must bring your last beautiful poem to read to Mr. Fitzmaurice."

Mr. Haughton drew up his shirt collar on both sides, and smiled in token of pleased consent. Accordingly, when we had come to the

end of the worst singing and playing to which I had ever listened; and the father, three daughters, and two sons, had individually and collectively received due tribute, Mr. Caleb Haughton was sent for a manuscript volume, out of which our host read aloud a new ode to Cecilia, fifteen acrostics, six valentines, and as many pointless charades: the whole concluding with a dirge to the memory of a favorite cow, which had died of over-eating herself in a field of clover. To describe the nasal twang which served as accompaniment to the most contemptible doggrels ever penned or strung together, can only be done by reference to the worst country clerk who ever howled a stave in parish church; and the finishing stroke to this exhibition was given in the waving to and fro a long pale hand adorned with two rings, the one a monstrous cameo, and the other a platform of hair under a slab of glass, the size of a tombstone.

The happy hour of emancipation arrived, however, and my memoirs will swell to an unconscionable bulk, if I do not curtail my reminiscences. One more family must find a niche

in the temple of fame, and then I will hasten to my own affairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Broadstreet having secured a handsome competency in the linen trade, had retired from the Bleach-green, and bought a spacious house and demesne, which they fitted up, according to their ideas of taste, in the most *recherché* style. Colonnades and statues, pictures and pillars, met the eye at every step, and they called their abode Pæstum. At dinner there, we found an assemblage of forty people, and the airs of Mrs. Broadstreet would furnish a very pleasant volume to record; but I shall only mention that she and her husband had been abroad, and to appear *fine people* was the besetting folly of this entertaining pair. I had heard of their absurdity before I saw them, so expected some amusement. Mrs. Broadstreet's language and accent were the most comical mélange imaginable, of Irish brogue and London cockney, and were admirably described by a humourist who lived near her, by the illustration of a "pine-apple engrafted on a potato-stalk."

Gerald and I apologized for being late, when Mrs. Broadstreet, who was dressed in the extreme of French fashion, replied, "I beg you won't mention it. I was *leet* myself in my droive, two of my horses having been indisposed. I always droive with four, but to-day was redoosed to a pair."

The weather was talked of, and the influenza which had been the consequence of much rain. Mrs. Broadstreet turned to me, and said, "I do assure you, Mr. Fitzmaurice, that till I went to Fraunce, I was quoite a martyr to poitrinal attacks, but I had a recipe from the first physician in Pauris, which I have found a sovereign cure. The vulgarity of our British herbs always prevented me from studying simples, till I went abroad. Nine out of ten of our English plants I think are called *worts*, which really makes one feel when repeating such sound, as if one was in a brewery. There is no *grossieaté* in any thing abroad, and my housekeeper makes the noicest composition of *tutsan*, *passerage*, *fenasse*, and *concombre*, *sauvage*, which are droied and *trituré* in a mortar with syrop *de capillaire*."

Mr. Saunders, the humourist, to whom I have alluded, whose riches made him courted even by those who trembled at his satirical vein, answered drily, "I am a bad Frenchman, Mrs. Broadstreet. You mercantile people, as I always say, beat us country gentlemen hollow at languages. May I ask you for the vulgar English of your foreign herbs?"

Mrs. Broadstreet coloured violently, and with an indignant air retorted, "I believe, Mr. Saundas, that you have lived much more in the commercial world than I have done. Lavinia, moi love, can you tell the English names in the '*Melange Pectoral?*' I have quoite forgotten, if I ever knew them."

Her daughter, a plain, straight forward person, gave the translation. Presently, some one remarked how the streets in Dublin swarmed with beggars.

"It is quoite a disgrace to this country," said Mrs. Broadstreet. "Though not in the habit of supporting ministers, I should willingly give my vote for sending all the *canaille* out of the kingdom. There is some *gentillesse* about a

French beggar, however *delabié*, but our people are really shocking, and there is quoite a *mauvaise odeur* as one droives along the streets. I shall be *au desespoir* if something is not devoised by Parliament for getting rid of our population."

"Emigration is expensive," said Mr. Saunders, sarcastically. "Will you give your money with your vote, Mrs. Broadstreet?"

"I hate finaunce in all its shapes," answered this affected vulgar woman, who believed herself to be *haut ton;* "I leave every thing of the koind to Mr. B. and detest the *bourgeoisie* of money matters." It would waste time and paper to occupy more of either with the inhabitants of Pæstum. Poor Mr. Broadstreet pretended to intimate acquaintance with all the nobility, who, by his own account, could not do any thing without his advice and assistance, shrugged his shoulders when he had nothing to say, pronounced every word spelled with an *a* and *e* inversely, and would tell you of *sai-beething* and the *increaise of geem*; but he gave excellent dinners, capital wines, and a hearty laugh to all the country, so that every card of invitation was sure to

be met by "happy to wait on Mr. and Mrs. Broadstreet."

A little merriment at the expense of these odd people furnished the episodes of our life, while Gerald and I found a great deal to do in planning alterations, and hearing the long stories of every one who had a favour to ask.

At last a letter arrived from Mr. Keen, my attorney, to say that the title was clearly made out, and my purchase concluded. So delighted did I feel with this news that I promised in a fit of good humour never to laugh again at Goldsmith's line:

"He was, could he help it, a special attorney."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Orders were now given to prepare for our departure, which was strenuously urged in every letter from Elwood. Maria's constant injunction, reiterated whenever she wrote to me, was, "Do not forget that you must not suffer any 'white armed daughter of Innisfail' as Ossian describes our country-women, to lure you from me. I cannot spare you."

"No," murmured I to myself, "dear as is the affection which would draw me hence, it must not be that I quit my first sense of duty. Even to please this kindest of sisters, I must not be an absentee; and if my home is Hibernian, so ought to be my wife, though I have not yet found her. Will any of Maria's luxurious nymphs exchange the garden of England for

the mountain heath of this isle of mists? It cannot be."

I was longing, however, to visit Elwood, and as Gerald had received a letter by the same post which brought mine from Mr. Keen, to say that his brother had returned to Penrhüdlyn, he was as anxious as I was to commence our journey.

We left Craigallan at early dawn. Yet found an assembled multitude to say farewell, and cast each his mite of benediction into the general exchequer of good wishes for "long life and safe return home again." How is it that so many are to be found resisting such fond entreaty? I was quite affected by the tears that accompanied the blessings of these poor people, and was hurrying away to avoid a prolonged scene, when my risible muscles had their turn at sight of a strange fantastic figure who pressed through the crowd which had gathered round my gate, and bundled up in shreds and patches of various dye, thrust a paper into my hand as I was driving past. I stopped, thinking that it

would be unkind to reject some (perhaps) urgent supplication for present relief.

"Who are you, my lad? what do you want with me?"

"Plase your honor, I'm a flyen stationer, and poor scholar too, and I only want your honor to laive me sing a song that I brought wid me, the same as I gave into your hand, all for grief of your goen away."

I could not deny a request which Gerald insisted on granting; so laying down a basket made of mat, which held his merchandize, my young harlequin began, and in a sweet but untutored voice poured forth a lament in one of the ancient Irish melodies which go straight to the heart. The concluding stanza ran thus:

> Droop not bowers, weep not flowers,
> Fitzmaurice soon will come again,
> Shadows lighten, spirits brighten,
> And sunshine gladdens all the plain."

"Fitmaurice is not the name in this printed copy," said I.

"Oh no, plase your honor. I changes the name to shoot (suit) whoever I'll want to sing for."

"This is not very flattering, however," answered I; "your praise fits any block on which you stick it."

"Ah then sure your honor, 'tis'nt I would wish to flatther you, if I could. The poems are ready made to my hand, and all I have to do is to take out one name and put in another."

"What is your occupation, and what have you got in your basket?"

"Plase your honor, I have tracks and songs, and paper, and quills; and I gets a bit o'bread be writen for the people any bit of a pettishon, or a love-letther or that—"

This boy amused us so much that I could have dallied for an hour to hear his extraordinary lingo, but throwing him half a crown, for which his hat, which looked as if it had played the target in many a *shooting* match, flew up into the air, away we drove.

When we reached Holyhead, Gerald diverged to Penrhüdlyn, while I pursued the route to Elwood-park.

The meeting with my sisters would, under any circumstances, have been a joyful event,

but prosperity sheds a ray of double gilding wherever it shines, and I cannot describe the exultation of heart with which I caught the first view of those noble woods which encircled Maria's abode.

What a welcome awaited me! The kindness, too, of Lord Clonmore, completed the enchantment; and I felt glad that the die was cast, and Craigallan actually mine before the fascinations of this princely residence exerted their Circean influence to shake resolution, and weaken my patriotism.

The gardens, grounds, woods, park, were splendid, and I had something new to see every day. Maria was intent on making me acquainted with her neighbours, and engaged to perform a regular *progress* through the county with me. "I will shew Albert whatever is most attractive within reach of Elwood, before I despair of surprising his heart, and making him a prisoner," said my countess, and so we set out upon our touring project.

We visited Lord Merton's fine seat, and passed three days in one continued round of

music, dancing, riding, rowing, and billiards. Nothing which luxury could supply was wanted to embellish Cumner Hall, of which two daughters completed the charm. When we regained Elwood, we all agreed that we were weary of the demand upon our animal spirits, and were rejoiced to be at home again. "This *all-day* excitement is very tiresome," said Lord Clonmore.

"I found it so," answered Maria, "and saw many of the party like myself yawning *à close bouche*, fatigued by too great a strain upon their social powers, though when the wheel is put in motion nobody appears to have courage to stop it."

"I would rather live in a desert," said Geraldine, "than in such a round of gaiety; and the Miss Cumners seem to me to be very unhappy people. There is nothing domestic amongst them, and though they do not enjoy the whirl in which they are continually involved, they would submit to any thing rather than endure being reduced to the family circle. I asked them whether they felt no pleasure in their

gardens, their beautiful conservatory, or the various interests which grow out of a country life. 'Oh no,' said Miss Cumner; 'who could be at the trouble of cultivating such sort of things? It is right to *have* them, but I take no delight in them, and should like to sleep through the summer as the dormouse does through the winter season. I *exist* at Cumner Hall, I *live* in London.'"

Sir Henry Fitzjohn's was the next place to which we went, prepared to stay for some days. He and Lady Fitzjohn were quite pleasing people. Of four children, two were sons and two were daughters. The former were absent, the elder on his travels, the younger in the guards. The Miss Fitzjohns were pretty and accomplished, and during the first day, I thought them all that was pleasing and polite; but a week is an epitome of life in the intimacy of a country house, and on the second morning, at breakfast, an unlucky allusion to some improvement in the principal streets of the metropolis within the last year, drew from Miss Fitzjohn the severest expression of countenance directed

towards Sir Henry with a side glance, while she answered with bitterness, "*We* are Goths, Vandals, any thing you please most savage. We have not been in town for two years."

"No," replied Sir Henry, "had we passed either of the two last winters in London, we should, I am persuaded, never have brought your mamma back again to Rockington."

"I am sure," said Miss Harriet Fitzjohn, "that mamma's dislike to London is entirely nervous. Lady Merton is quite as delicate as she is, and yet always does like other people. I trust that *I* shall never have such fancies, they come so much in the way of other people's happiness."

Sir Henry bit his lip, and Lady Fitzjohn coloured, but they were too well bred to egotise in this querulous manner any longer, and the subject was changed; short as it was, however, it had furnished the clue, which, by following, I discovered every secret recess of character throughout the family.

"There is no harmony at Rockington," said

I to Geraldine, as we took a delightful ride *tête-à-tête* on our return to Elwood.

"No," answered she, "and I begin to think that the sweet bond of mother and daughter is vanishing quickly from the world. Lady Fitzjohn is very amiable, but too feeble to endure a London winter, and *so* her children do not love her!"

"Pray," said I, "what sort of people are these Apsleys to whom we are engaged next week?"

"You shall judge for yourself," replied Geraldine, and to Linton we went on the appointed day.

Mr. Apsley was a sensible, worthy man, but he and his family had just staid long enough on the Continent to spoil the taste of his wife and daughters for every thing English. Lady Grace Apsley had been beautiful, and was still a very fine woman. Three daughters disputed the palm of loveliness with their mother, supplying by the charm of youth what might be thought inferior to her in symmetry. Good company, aided by good fortune, secures the gratification

of a passing guest, and nothing could be more agreeable than a visit of which eight and forty hours were the limit; but the last sentence which I heard from the lips of Mr. Apsley, in reply to Lady Grace, just before we left their house, condensed into a brief statement the vexations which corroded life at Linton.

"Aye, nothing is right now; poor Linton cannot even produce good fruit or flowers, beef or mutton; nothing will go down but Paris, and I think that our tour has only taught us to be discontented."

"I do not wonder at mamma," said Miss Apsley; "I sympathize in all her feelings, and often wish that I had wings. If I had, I should quit these Bœotian shores, and direct my flight to dear Italy and France."

"Well, Albert!" exclaimed Maria, "this stubborn heart of yours seems still unmoved. If it does not surrender at Sir Roger Lipscombe's on Tuesday next, I fear that I must give you up, and relinquish all my schemes against your liberty."

As we approached Mount Lipscombe, I was

struck by the prodigious size of every horse, cow, ox, sheep, or other beast within the precincts of its fertile pastures, and could not help saying, in the words of Johnson's parody, that if

"Who drives fat oxen must himself be fat,"

we might expect to see a Quinbus Flestrum at the end of our drive.

"You will not be disappointed," said Lord Clonmore: "Sir Roger understands feeding in all its branches."

We arrived, and were ushered into a state drawing-room, which had been evidently *undressed* for the occasion; linen bags, paper hoods, and green baize, had apparently preserved the rich glow of damask, which from the antiquity of its *setting*, would naturally have left its brightness far behind, had it not been well secured from the encroachments of light and air. Such a family as met my eyes, I never had seen before. Sir Roger was a perfect Falstaff, and Lady Lipscombe, when seated, described an inclined plane from her chin to the floor, while five Miss Lipscombes, bidding fair to emulate their portly parents in maturer age, sat round a

large rose-wood table, which had been polished into a reflector by the labours of a century at least, and seemed, together with their shadows, like a double parterre of full blown pæonies. The whole party looked as if they sat perennially to receive company. The ladies had all their gloves on, and their curls crisp, fixed, and shining, appeared as if the entire household had been baked in an oven after their toilette was finished. In vain did I look round for book, work, musical instrument, or any thing denoting employment, which might serve as "a hook on which to hang an idea." No such aid presented itself, and taking refuge in the *view*, after a due interval which succeeded the salutation volley, I ventured to ask one of the hedge-row of "double and of single pinks" that decorated the apartment, whether she and her sisters were fond of sketching. Miss Clemina's cheeks assumed a deeper carmine, and how or when she would have replied, I know not, but her father, who overheard the question, spared her the trouble of answering.

"No, Mr. Fitzmaurice, my daughters neither

scream nor daub, nor do any thing that can be ranked under the head of modern accomplishments. It may be very well for people who cannot purchase the labours of those who live by their talents, to exert their own in disturbing the peace of a neighbourhood, if it suit their fancy to do so, but Lady Lipscombe and I have set our faces against fashionable education. When we visit some of our neighbours, I do not recover from my hearing for three or four days afterwards, my ears are so assailed by voices and instruments, trebles and bases, tenors and counter-tenors, harps, piano-fortes, flutes and guitars; to say nothing of the bursting of a *polyglot*, in an inundation of French, Italian, and German. *Some* folks find these tinklings necessary to decoy admirers, as bees are assembled by hammering a tin pan with a key, but I am fond of the old Spanish proverb, which being translated, means that there is "no sticking-plaster like a ducat." There is nothing which money will not command. Money, Sir, is power. I am one of your *cui bono* men, and always ask the *uses* of a thing before I adopt it."

This eloquent and refined harangue was interrupted by a veteran butler, who seemed a family heir-loom, and who announced dinner. We marched between two files of powdered men, who were nearly jointless from the casing of massy silver lace in which they were bound. The dinner was superb, wines of the first order, and every silver salver was large enough for one of the ponderous Miss Lipscombes to have danced a pas seul upon. If the love of wealth had ever been my besetting sin, I now had a lesson more instructive than volumes of precept, and thought every hour twelve months till we quitted this *Smithfield* of corpulence and stupefaction.

On returning to Elwood, the first thing I did was to prove my freedom from the oppressive yoke with which I had been fettered, by running through the grounds to the banks of a beautiful stream, so pure and peaceful, that I determined to put myself in good humour by half an hour's rest upon its margin, and had scarcely seated myself on a rock by the river side before Geraldine arrived by another path at the same spot.

We laughed at the sympathy which brought us together, and heartily enjoyed giving vent to our vexation at being obliged to perform such a penance as we had lately undergone.

Complacency succeeds rage as a calm follows a storm, and having exhausted our abusive powers on Mount Lipscombe, Sir Roger, his Lady, and their whole fleet of daughters, I became pacified, and began to muse in general terms on the structure of society. " Surely," said I, " we are self-tormentors, and like the Eastern fakirs, lay these burthens on ourselves. Why have not people courage to be happy? Why does every one complain, yet still subscribe an individual effort to swell the stock of common discomfort? Look at this perfect scene before us, and say how it is that crowds of uninteresting people, confined in hot rooms, still exercise such attraction, that we go on sighing for the charm within our reach, and condemning ourselves to a toil which we agree is insupportable."

" How singular!" answered Geraldine, " the very words of—"

" Of who?"

"Oh! — of — Maria. Of — I forget what I was going to say."

Geraldine looked all confusion. "It is in vain," said I, "that you attempt to deceive me. You blush as you did when I picked up your letter. What *is* this mystery?"

"I will be mysterious, dear Albert, no longer than till this day week. You shall then hear all that you desire to know. Put me in mind of my promise, and you shall not have to reproach me again with unkindness in repressing your curiosity." Finding my little sister inexorable upon the point of abridging my trial, I was obliged to be satisfied.

As we walked towards the house, we met Maria, whom I informed that were she Queen Elizabeth herself, I would not go with her upon another "*progress*," till the waters of Lethe had rolled over my keen recollection of Lipscombe. Maria was provokingly diverted at my expense, but assured me that I should have a holiday, and some very agreeable guests arriving at Elwood on that day, I thought no more of my troubles.

Some days passed; the strangers disappeared, and a lovely morning shone upon the party assembled at breakfast.

"Albert, ring the bell," said Maria; "I must order the horses earlier than usual. We have a long ride over the downs, and must set out at twelve. Will you and Geraldine go with me?"

"If you do not take me to Mount Lipscombe, I am at your Ladyship's service," said I.

Orders were given; we mounted our steeds, and obeying our "Lady of the ascendant," struck off in a direction entirely different from any of our former rides. The weather was delightful: my sisters were excellent horsewomen, and nothing could surpass the beauty of the landscape after a soft shower, which dressed the light-green foliage of a birch wood, along the skirts of which our road lay, in peculiar freshness.

"Come," said I, "Geraldine; here is a shade exactly suited to our mystery, and I recollect this moment that the spell is at an end. I will wait no longer. This is the appointed term,

and I must hear the story that you have promised me."

"So you shall, and in this very spot if you like, but it must be on our return," answered Geraldine.

"You know at least," said Maria, "the art of enhancing the value of your disclosure by delay. Beware, my dear, of the mountain and the mouse."

At the distance of eight miles from Elwood, a short turn round a knoll of uncommon verdure, brought us suddenly upon a valley of exquisite beauty, through which a winding river sped its course between banks richly fringed to the water's edge with the finest evergreens, interspersed with deciduous shrubs in full blossom. Wreaths of blue smoke, curling above the tufted trees, announced our near approach to some pleasant habitation, before we caught a glimpse of a building, the owners of which might be envied at least for the romantic loveliness of their dwelling.

"What a scene of fairy enchantment," ex-

claimed I, "and what a pity to spoil it by a tiresome visit."

"Our horses will not agree with you," said Maria; "they will not find fault with an hour's rest in the stable, and you must not be uncivil to the dearest friends I have in the world."

I had no time for farther inquiry. We were at the gate, which a venerable old man, all beaming with gladness, came out to open as nimbly as if he had been five-and-twenty.

"Are they come, Gilbert?"

"Oh yes, my Lady, thanks be to God; they came home yesterday to dinner."

Maria rode forward through a shady avenue which terminated in a velvet lawn, dotted over with tufts of the most luxuriant calmias, heaths, and other American plants. A young lady with a basket on her arm, and attended by a boy carrying another full of roots, was startled by the trampling of our horses' feet upon the gravel, and abruptly turning round, my sisters alighted in an instant; the three friends were locked in each other's arms, and before I could recover from the agitation into which a transient

view of the fair stranger's features had thrown me, I was presented by Maria to "Miss Bouverie."

My emotion completely deprived me of utterance; I felt myself turn as pale as ashes, and fell back to take breath, while the lovely being who had produced my embarrassment, looked surprised, as if by some glance of memory which shot across her mind at sight of me; and as if to conceal a surmise which would have divided her attention, she hurried my sisters towards the house. A few minutes more, and we were all assembled in the presence of Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie, the most interesting people in the world, except their daughter; I felt as if transported to a higher sphere; all around appeared enchantment.

The beauty of Miss Bouverie was of that kind which did not catch the eye through mere symmetry and colouring, but rivetted the imagination, and won the heart, from its continual variety and depth of expression; while the charm which captivated beyond all others, was the perfect nature that governed every look,

word, or action. The elegance which breathed in the very atmosphere of Lyras, did not seem to proceed from study, nor to be dictated by fashion, but suggested the idea of resulting from the character of its inhabitants. The conversation was animated and agreeable; we talked of the Continent, of the new publications, of prints, drawing, gardening; and whatever was the subject, it was marked by refined taste and sound judgment.

We had been two hours at Lyras, which seemed to me about five minutes, when to my infinite delight Sir Thomas proposed to shew Maria some rare foreign plants which he had brought home. The party paired off, and I found myself actually walking by the side of Mona Bouverie.

Taking instant advantage of opportunity, "Have I not," said I, "had the happiness of seeing Miss Bouverie before? If not, I have certainly met with her express image in Jersey."

"I think I have seen *you* in Jersey," replied the sweetest voice imaginable. "Did you not lodge at the farm-house belonging to Annette

Regnier? Can you tell me any thing of the interesting invalid and his friend, whom we left behind in the Island?"

The amiable Mona was much affected by the intelligence which I gave her, and shocked as well as astonished at learning that Harold was my brother, and no longer in being.

"Forgive me, I pray, Mr. Fitzmaurice, for having touched upon so unfortunate a subject—but it cannot be! Your brother? Maria's brother? Impossible! There must be some mistake. The name of the two cousins who were objects of tender solicitude to my father and mother, and who inhabited Annette's farm while we were at La Bergerie, was Campbell."

I explained, as briefly as I could, and promised a detailed narrative of all that had happened whenever I might be so fortunate as to see her again separated from my sisters, whose feelings I told her I desired to spare, by alluding no farther than had been barely necessary to the fate of our beloved departed, with many pathetic circumstances, relating to the death of whom, they were still ignorant.

The rapt attention with which my tale was heard, gratified my best feelings, and the pleasure of thus conversing alone with my fascinating companion was indescribable. In the few moments which were so occupied, we established a sort of secret intelligence by communicating on a subject exclusively our own; and I felt that this accident had produced more intimacy of acquaintance in one short visit than usually grows out of many ordinary meetings. In short I was a stricken deer, the dart had pierced its victim, and an impression, vivid as it was new, convinced me already that Maria's day of triumph had arrived.

We sauntered along the pleasure-grounds, and went into conservatories, pineries, hot-houses, and blow-houses, of which I knew nothing more than that they procured me the delight of watching the movements of that "inexpressive she" who absorbed my whole attention. Her parents were *her* chief objects, even in the company of her beloved friends. Not a word or look of her father or mother escaped the vigilant tenderness of their daughter, in

whose heart duty and affection seemed so identified that they governed the same impulses of her nature. Her arm was ready to assist, her eye prompt to anticipate; and the highest attraction of rank or fashion could not have had power to detach Mona's regards from these revered objects of her first solicitude. Lyras presented a picture of domestic harmony which inspired happiness to contemplate. It was a scene of unaffected and devoted attachment, unmixed with selfishness, egotism, or display. In the artificial world, every sentence which is uttered, is stamped with insincerity of one sort or other; either some idle flattery or challenge to draw it forth—some lying excuse for doing, or not doing—some assent to opinions which we do not hold, or contradiction of principles which we know to be true—but simplicity and grace distinguished every word, look, and movement of Miss Bouverie. When I expressed my regrets at not having been so fortunate as to meet any of the Lyras family in town during the winter, Miss Bouverie answered,

"We do not go to town, unless when busi-

ness calls my father thither, and then we go together, because separation is painful to us all, and our trio makes a convenient number for travelling; but though London contains much to delight in many different ways, I always rejoice to find myself *at home* again."

I gazed with rapture on the sweetest animation of countenance which ever lighted human features, when, in reply to a warm invitation to Elwood, the lovely Mona told Maria how glad she felt that Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie had promised to accept it, and pay a visit there in the following week; but a sigh escaped as I remembered Craigallan and all my good resolutions. Alas! said I, *my* home is in Ireland—Lyras in England.

Starting from a momentary reverie, "Have you ever in all your travels," said I, "Miss Bouverie, visited our Emerald Isle?"

"Yes, and love it better than any part of the world. My mother is Irish, and was on her way to the home of her youth, when I was born only a few miles from the shore, in the Island of Anglesea. I was called Mona after my

birth-place, and passed the first joyous years of infancy in your green Erin."

I would not have taken a diadem in exchange for the transport which this intelligence created in my breast. To hear that Miss Bouverie was *almost* my countrywoman, and loved Ireland better than any part of the world, was perfect bliss. And yet the influence of these sentiments on my happiness was not easy to explain. What apparent interest had I in Miss Bouverie's tastes and inclinations?

At last the dismal sound of the bell, was a signal of woe to me, when the horses were ordered. The whole party accompanied my sisters to the door, where we were met by Philippa, rejoicing at her liberation from the stable, and manifesting her delight, at returning home, in a thousand gambols. In the moment of her appearance Miss Bouverie recognised her old favourite, who repaid her notice by the most enraptured greeting, the demonstrations of which were nearly as vehement as those with which the affectionate animal welcomed me in the valley of St. Helier. This coincidence charmed

me, and if the reader has ever loved, my feelings will not require to be analyzed to make them understood.

Miss Bouverie looked embarrassed, recollecting my wish to conceal all allusion to our former meeting from Maria and Geraldine, but Philippa arrested every one's attention, and an explanation must have ensued, as Sir Thomas was beginning to remember that he had seen the dog *somewhere* before, if I had not hastened the departure of my sisters, who promised to send Lord Clonmore on the following day, to obtain confirmation of the engagement to visit Elwood.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Where could the Bouveries have become so well acquainted with Philippa?" said Geraldine, as we rode from the gate. "Mona called her by her name, and did not reply when I asked her to explain. What can this mean?"

"We will walk our horses," answered I, "when we reach the birch-wood, and I will tell you all." My mind was so excited, and I so much longed to be made acquainted with all my companions could tell of the Bouveries, that I resolved on entitling myself to the history by the fullest detail on my part.

My narrative was deeply interesting to those on whose ears it fell. I gave a sketch of every

circumstance, from the time of my separation in France to my uncle's death, and my subsequent arrival in England; and when I had finished, reminded Geraldine that she had a pledge to redeem.

"You deserve, dearest Albert, that I should perform my vow; and if Mona Bouverie were not associated with the *blushes* which puzzled you so exceedingly, I should fear that Maria's prediction of the mountain and the mouse would be strictly verified; but you shall hear all the little that I have to say.

"When first Maria came to England she was presented by Lord Clonmore to the Bouveries as his dearest friends, and I need not add that the bond of friendship was soon extended. From the first hour of acquaintance Maria selected these charming people from the crowd, and every succeeding day has only served to strengthen the tie which binds us in a mutual league of affection. Lady Bouverie's high connections and perfect knowledge of the world, rendered her advice and *chaepronesship* invaluable to Maria at the time of her debut in high life;

while all that was excellent in heart and sound in understanding proved an equal prize in private communion. The lovely Mona became every thing to me, and her companionship more than repaid me for the sacrifices which I was daily called upon to offer on the shrine of heartless vanity and show. Here now follows, then, my confession, and I must deprecate your wrath while I tell you that Maria and I conspired against your peace, and from the period when time had sufficiently matured our knowledge of the virtues which adorn the character of our sweet friend, it has been our favourite speculation that you and she should become acquainted, and think of each other as we do of both. In order, however, to give our little romance the fairest chance of realization, we determined on not saying a single word to prejudice you in favour of our friends. We wanted to see the natural working of your own mind, and promised ourselves the greatest delight in watching the development of your sentiments, little imagining that you had ever met with the object of our day-dream ; but it is very difficnlt to keep a

secret from those we love, and I was twice in danger of betraying mine. Once, when you picked up a letter from Mona, sealed with a Druid's head, a device which she assumes in honour of her rocky island; and the second time, when you expressed amazement that the beauties of nature were not more generally influential on the habits of mankind, in words so precisely similar to those in which Mona had made the same remark, that I was on the point of proclaiming the sympathy of your opinions. This is literally all that I have to reveal, and were Mona not my heroine, the want of all dramatic effect in my story would, I fear, render this long withheld mystery a sad disappointment."

Geraldine ceased. I devoured her tale with every sense, and made her repeat different parts of it over and over. She seemed a perfect enchantress, and every word she uttered cast a spell around my heart and imagination. No wonder that we arrived late at Elwood, and that poor Lord Clonmore was uneasy, lest some accident had befallen the riding party.

Maria soon betrayed me, as I had reason to

suspect, for Lord Clonmore began to be merry at my expense in the evening. Excited as I had never been before, I suppose that my countenance may have been more than usually animated; and anxious as till then I had never felt, it is equally possible that a sigh may have escaped me. All I know as matter of *fact* was, that my host, looking slily at me, repeated from our prince of bards,

> "How nobly he yokes
> A smiling with a sigh: as if the sigh
> Was that it was for not being such a smile;
> The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly
> From so divine a temple, to commix
> With winds that sailors rail at."

Love is a fine sweetener of our tempers. I remember to have heard a penurious man say, that when in love he was apprehensive of becoming bankrupt through his generosity; and such was the magical effect of my visit to Lyras, that I bore the raillery of Lord and Lady Clonmore with the most amiable good humour, and the only revenge which I took of Geraldine for joining in the laugh against me, was to implore the blind arbiter of human hearts to make her

merciful through fellow-feeling, and place her in the same situation which now produced her gaiety; a gaiety however which was exchanged, in the first moment of *tête-a-tête*, for the most tender solicitude in my fortune. Geraldine and I sat up more than half the night, and I heard such details, such anecdotes of Mona and her parents, as made me fancy them dear familiar friends with whom I had passed my life.

If there is one sensation more rapturous than another in existence, it is surely felt in tracing similitudes between our own views, sentiments, and opinions, and those of a beloved object, and it enchanted me to find that Miss Bouverie and I held the same upon many of the most important subjects of life. The more I heard, however, and the more infatuated I was with her character, the less at ease did I feel. My joyous emotions began to fade in the brightness of her perfection, and I began to think such a treasure completely beyond my reach as above my deserts. The sole surviving scion of an ancient stock, the idol of her parents, and so fondly attached to them that numerous candidates of pretensions far superior to mine had been dis-

missed from Lyras, what presumption would it be in me to aspire!

It is surprising how a few hours, without any alteration of external circumstances, can sometimes weaken the faculty of hope. My evening spirit had been all buoyant and elastic: morning found the same spirit chilled and desponding. "I must fly to Craigallan," said I to myself. "Why should I suffer my happiness to be destroyed by allowing an entanglement of this sort to proceed, till every fibre is so firmly knotted as to defy my best efforts? I must seek for safety in flight; that's plain." Thus soliloquizing, I joined the breakfast-table, at which Lord Clonmore presently announced his intention of riding over to call on his friend Sir Thomas; and turning to me, added, "Fitzmaurice, you have been so tormented by these sisters of yours into visiting the whole country round, that it is charity to spare you, *otherwise* I would ask you to accompany me this morning."

The matter was quickly adjusted, and my first movement in the meditated flight to Craigallan was made in an opposite direction, while my first

effort at staying the process of a dangerous sentiment, was to confirm its empire uncontrollably in my heart. Such is human strength; such it has been from the days of father Adam, and such it will be till the last man is left in solitary sadness upon earth.

We were fortunate in finding the family at Lyras all at home, and however time may be chargeable on some occasions with drowsiness, his wing here had no dull Lethean slumbers. A second visit to this happy group irretrievably enthralled me.

Sir Thomas Bouverie was a fine specimen of the ancient English gentleman. He was both a scholar and a critic; informed in a high degree, but altogether free from the *rust* of learning. Tasteful and well bred, he loved to impart his knowledge; and his literary pleasures were all shared in common with his wife and daughter, in whose loved society his happiest hours were spent. Lady Bouverie was meet companion of such a man. Her talents were very superior, and her manners of the most polished elegance, while the liveliness of Irish character added a

spirit to her conversation which, when tempered by refinement, is peculiarly captivating. In their only child were blended all the qualities and adornments which were severally possessed by either of her parents; and the scene of rational animated felicity which their home exhibited, spread an influence of virtuous cheerfulness on all who came within the sphere of their attraction.

Since my first visit to Lyras, I discovered that the whole story of my poor Harold had been told by Miss Bouverie to her father and mother, and I had also the happiness to perceive that the partial testimony of Maria to a brother's character had produced a favourable impression, the pleasing effects of which I experienced in the kindest reception. Philippa was inquired for, and caressed; and before our departure the beautiful Mona tied a wreath of larch, glowing with its tender scarlet cones, round the neck of her little favourite.

On arriving at Elwood, we found that letters had been received during our absence from Penrhüdlyn, which announced the approach of Mor-

daunt and Gerald Courtenay on the following day. This intelligence at any other time would have been met by me with unmixed delight, but an unwelcome cloud momentarily crossed my mind, in the idea that even Gerald, my friend, my more than brother, might be an obstacle to intercourse with her who absorbed my whole soul. The ungenerous thought, however, was but short-lived, and yielded to a feeling more familiar to my breast.

The quick eye of Maria observed this transient conflict, and she interrupted the train of my wishes and my fears, by beckoning me to follow her to her dressing-room, where, making me sit down by her, she said playfully, but tenderly, "I know all that is passing in your mind, and cannot permit your heart to become less amiable than it is its nature to be, because you are giving it up without reserve to the deares friend I have in the world, of whom it would be wholly unworthy, if jealousy or selfishness were allowed to become an inmate of your bosom; but you must forget Mona and Gerald, and every body for a little while, to think only of

our beloved sister, of whom I have now a tale to tell.

"You know of our meeting, while we were abroad, with Mordaunt Courtenay, who as yet is a stranger to you, and therefore you are not aware, that to know and to love him are one and the same thing, but the delicacy of Geraldine's character is such, that she would scarcely confess to her own bosom the deep interest which her cousin had excited; and I only, who am acquainted with every feeling of her heart, could perceive how completely the idea of Mordaunt has occupied her memory ever since, to the exclusion of every rival sentiment. Mordaunt's poverty sealed his lips from giving utterance to a deeply engraven attachment, and it was not till this day, when one of the most eloquent avowals of devoted affection has set me at liberty, that I could venture to speak to you on a subject so interesting to us both. The noble generosity of Gerald has put his brother in possession of independence, and the first use which he makes of it, is to throw himself at Geraldine's feet. The all-engrossing theme of a brother's

happiness seems so entirely to occupy the thoughts of your friend, that I am much mistaken, if you find him a clog upon your visits at Lyras. Here is his letter to me. What a being he is!"

I read, and echoed Maria's concluding words. Yes, Gerald was indeed such a being as is rarely to be found on earth. On discovering his brother's attachment, he had insisted on doubling the portion which he had originally allotted to him, declaring, that he reserved quite enough for a *bachelor's portion.*

"You see," said Maria, "that this high-minded Gerald, this 'master spirit,' must be received as he deserves at Elwood. If Albert looked coldly, what would avail a thousand smiles and welcomes from me?"

"He shall be received to my 'heart of heart,' and (inspired by a fitful gleam of virtuous emulation, I was going to add,) if Gerald, who is to me as 'Hyperion to a satyr,' could win that gem which is the object of my ambition, how much more worthy of such a lot is he, and how base the man who could envy his fortune." But the

words died away in an inaudible murmur on my lips, and Maria smiling, shook her head, and said,

"My poor Albert is too honestly in love to play the *hero* at present."

I next flew to Geraldine's apartment. As I entered she rose, hastily folding a letter, and her cheeks were suffused with such a tint as glows in the freshness of summer's first rose. I caught her in my arms, and after a moment's expressive pause, said, "Mordaunt is deserving of my sister, and ought to be blessed by her answering affection."

"I do not merit such love as his," replied Geraldine, with great emotion; "but if he thinks otherwise, I glory in the confession that he has long been dear to my heart, and that to contribute to his happiness would be the best security for my own."

The following day brought together a group who, after the numerous vicissitudes which marked their individual history, found such delight as rarely falls to human lot, in each other's society.

Gerald's first anxiety was for the interests of his brother, his second for those of his friend; for himself, had he been more susceptible than was the case, to the graces of Miss Bouverie, his noble mind would not have harboured for a single moment a thought which might have grown into an enemy of Albert's peace. He saw and admired her, but it was with feelings such as he bore to Geraldine. The family of Lyras were prevailed upon to prolong their stay, and I had time, of which I made the most attentive profit to study Mona's character, and what a study did it not afford, uniting as she did, the depth and delicacy of refinement, too often seen joined to hypocrisy, with that beautiful artlessness which as frequently loses its charm by existing in combination with ignorant simplicity. The most unerring sense of duty formed the ground-work, upon which was raised a superstructure of whatever might best adorn the female mind. She excelled in all the modern accomplishments, yet so little did music, drawing, and dancing, which appear to constitute the entire *revenue* of a woman of fashion, in-

trude upon the view in Miss Bouverie's instance, that she seemed scarcely to owe any part of her fascination to these acquirements; and it was only as occasion drew her talents forth, that I became acquainted with their variety and extent.

I one day remarked to her that she did not deserve to possess such attainments, so slight was the value which she seemed to attach to them.

"On the contrary," she replied, "I account nothing a trifle which has the power to confer pleasure on those I love, but still I would distinguish the mere garnish of life from its more solid materials."

We were alone, and I was on the point of improving opportunity, by bringing home this general remark, when Lord Clonmore provokingly came into the room to seek his countess.

"Where is Maria? I want to tell her of the death of poor Sir Marmaduke Elton. You knew Sir Marmaduke, Miss Bouverie. What a happy being is Lady Elton! She detested her husband, and now that she is free will soon supply his place. Her grief will not be inconsolable, I prognosticate."

"How dreadful!" said Miss Bouverie.

"Why dreadful?" answered Lord Clonmore, "is it not well to be spared the anguish which affection entails?"

Miss Bouverie coloured violently.

"Why does not the fair Mona speak?" said his lordship. "Is it not a great blessing to know nothing of that heart-rending sorrow which those who love are destined to feel when finally separated from each other?"

"Maria's husband does not think so," replied Miss Bouverie. "He knows that it is better to love and mourn, than hate and rejoice."

The dressing bell rang, and Mona rose to obey its summons, but the last sentence which she uttered, rested on my mind. It bespoke her sense of the attachment which might, and ought to bind those who are united by the tie of marriage; and the animated earnestness with which she spoke, proved how capable she was herself of being influenced by the sacred sentiment of which she had been the advocate. I felt this as a point gained, and dwelt with rapture on visions of my own weaving from these slender filaments of hope.

The sweetest hours are alas! the fleetest, and Elwood, so lately the world to me, became a blank, a solitude, when the Bouveries returned to Lyras. It was not that I loved my sisters less, but I loved another more. I was ashamed of my absence of mind, and reproached myself with want of natural affection, but no argument prevailed to accomplish more than saved appearance. I had merciful critics, however, who rejoiced rather than murmured at my abstraction.

The best substitute for the pleasure of which I had been deprived, presented itself in a good excuse for taking a ride to inquire for our departed friends. A slight sore throat, of which Lady Bouverie complained, furnished the first pretext, and as young lovers are seldom deficient in ingenuity, I soon by practice contrived to find some cogent reason for a daily visit to the idol of my adoration, while I perceived, with unspeakable gratitude and joy, that I was not repelled by Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie.

Geraldine and Mordaunt were tranquilly employed during this time in forming schemes of future happiness, dictated by the most perfect

congeniality of tastes and principles. I overheard Mordaunt one evening say to my sister:

"Yes, my Geraldine, the little inn of which I was going to relate an anecdote, is a true epitome of the world. On a pedestrian tour, which I made when I had not money to travel in any other way, I sought its asylum after a fatiguing day's pilgrimage. My manners were the same then that they are at present, but on desiring to be shewn into an apartment the waiter ran to the landlady, who asked with a loud decisive tone, 'how did he come?'

"'I do not know, Ma'am: the gentleman walked in at the door.'

"'Inquire then, and if he brought his own horses, shew him to No. 4; if saddle-bags, or a walker, the dark parlour is the place for him.'

"To the dark parlour I was condemned, but how different the reception of the same individual when Gerald and I at the same inn stepped from a fashionable London-built travelling carriage drawn by four beautiful greys! Let us, my Geraldine, without fighting with inns or landladies, or the world of which they are a type,

build our felicity on a surer and more durable foundation than that of popular applause."

A sweet smile, and gentle pressure of the hand evinced Geraldine's pleased acquiescence in views so accordant with her own.

Gerald returned to gladden his mother's heart at Penrhüdlyn, and said playfully of himself as he quitted Elwood, that as there was always one old bachelor in every family, he felt assured that the lot had fallen upon him.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds were to return from France in September, and Maria proposed to delay her sister's marriage till the friends of her early youth could be present at the ceremony. A letter at length announced the day of their intended arrival, and I was deputed to convey a note from Geraldine to her friend Miss Bouverie with the intelligence, which was received with the tenderest expression of affection.

"Dearest Geraldine," exclaimed the lovely Mona, who threw down her basket of wild-flowers to read the billet, of which I was bearer, "how shall I rejoice in witnessing her happiness, and happiness it will be, of no common

stamp, for she is blessed in the assurance, that all whose approbation is most precious to her, confirm her choice."

If an inanimate harp-string be touched, every other in harmonic relation will sound spontaneously through sympathy. Is it then to be wondered at, that a chord in my breast was found to vibrate in unison with a tone thus penetrating? Hurried in an instant, by an impulse which I no longer possessed the power to control, I seized Mona's hand, and setting the fortune of my life upon a single stake, with desperate resolution told my tale, and made her sole arbitress of my future destiny.

When a third person tells a love story, there is no particular too minute to be registered. Every sigh, every tear, every blush has its "recording angel;" and the language in which the narrative is imparted being universal, it is understood and tasted by all. But who can reveal the agitations of his own heart? Who can dissect the feelings of that halcyon hour in which the first attachment of youthful affection, fervent as de-

voted, timid as sincere, meets the rapturous sounds of kind return?

Those who have ever experienced the bewitching spell, know more than can be conveyed by tongue or pen, however eloquent; and he who has never felt a wound, laughs at the scars inflicted on his fellows, however pathetically described.

> "If thou rememberest not the slightest folly
> That ever love did make thee run into,
> Thou hast not loved:
> Or if thou hast not sat as I do now,
> Wearying the hearer in thy mistress' praise,
> Thou hast not loved:
> Or if thou hast not broke from company
> Abruptly, as my passion now makes me,
> Thou hast not loved."

But what would Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie say of my audacity? Their daughter might command all that the world calls good. I was as the dust of the balance when weighed against the fortunes of Albion's wealthy sons, and for birth what could I say but "My name is Albert; from Erin's hills I come, and without boast of heraldry or pomp of power, beyond the praise of being gently born, dare to adore

this old man's daughter." In what language should I clothe my daring to those beings who lived but for their child?

Yet the trial must be made. Would it be best to wait for the following day, and appear surrounded by my noble relatives, to urge my suit with all the pride and circumstance which rank confers, and might perhaps reflect upon the suppliant, or, placing all my trust in that nobleness of nature which had already risen superior to such supporters, should I boldly venture to put forth "the head and front of mine offending," in the unstudied guise of truth and nature?

I had no time to take counsel of my charming monitress, when Sir Thomas and Lady Bouverie appeared through the trees, winding by the path which led to the very spot occupied by their daughter and me. A coincidence so critical seemed to answer my doubts, and decide my conduct. Taking Mona's hand, therefore, as an amulet of power to avert all threatened danger, and meeting her parents on bended knee, I re-

vealed my presumption in short, but candid phrase, and entreated mercy; while Mona, beautiful as the Druid's morning star, with cheek suffused and downcast eye, stood in silence at my side, awaiting the answer which was to decide my fate.

That answer was mute, but Nestor's "honied tongue" never uttered sound so mellifluous as to compare with the eloquence of

> " That tear which tender fathers shed
> Upon a duteous daughter's head."

Such tears were now let fall on Mona by her beloved parents.

A scene almost as touching met my return at Elwood. Lord Clonmore pressed my hand, but could not speak. Maria wept, and folded me in her arms. Geraldine's "fellow feeling" heightened her sympathy to rapture, and Mordaunt's congratulations sparkled in every feature of his expressive countenance.

Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds returned with renovated health and spirit. Gerald, my dear and valued Gerald, prevailed upon his mother to

leave for *once* her sanctuary at Penrhiidlyn, and accompany him, with Mr. and Mrs. Somers to Elwood. My aunt's only objection to Mordaunt's union with his cousin was their relationship, but she waved her individual feeling in consideration of their unalterable attachment, and the singular congeniality which would, in any case, have attracted them towards each other, unlike those lazy loves which grow so often out of habitual intimacy, and end in dull unsuitable engagements.

The same day made four lovers happy, and the ceremony which gave them to each other was solemnized by Mr. Stockdale, that excellent man not finding it in his heart to refuse the pressing solicitation which urged him to leave his retreat, and visit scenes all new and unaccustomed. Though he had too much tact not to perceive his unfitness for a world so unlike his own as was Elwood, yet the ice of long imprisoned affection once broken, the heart of my worthy friend was unlocked, and opened to the genial glow of social kindness: he grew sensible to the

pain of being again immured in the solitude which he had left behind; yet he could not bear the idea of deserting his flock. Happily however, I was able to effect an exchange of livings, which sent a virtuous pastor to Glendruid, whose youth and strength were better suited to the task, while my Mentor accepted an endowment which transplanted him to Craigallan.

"True religion, my dear young friends," he used to say, "is the silent helmsman, the unerring pilot through life's stormy ocean. There cannot be any change of place or circumstance in which this holy principle will not preserve a man in his right course."

Mr. Stockdale lived to prove the truth of his favourite maxim in its fullest extent, and died lamented by all who had witnessed the illustration.

The drama commonly concludes with marriage, and when hope and fear no longer keep the mind in excitement, it is usual to dismiss the audience; but as real life is not the stage, it may perhaps be permitted to an unpractised

chronicler, ere the curtain drop, briefly to express his gratitude towards heaven for years of added happiness in the scene where every man ought sooner or later to be found at home in his own country.



THE END.

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